

LIBERTY CALL AT SUNSET: BELONGING, AGEING MASCULINITIES AND TRANSNATIONAL MARRIAGE IN SUBIC BAY, PHILIPPINES

Michael Brian Hawkins

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Approved by:

Scott Kirsch

Banu Gokariksel

Christian Lentz

Sara Smith

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ABSTRACT

Michael Brian Hawkins: Liberty Call at Sunset: Belonging, Ageing
Masculinities and Transnational Marriage in Subic Bay, Philippines
(Under the direction of Scott Kirsch)

For much of the twentieth century the American naval base at Subic Bay, Philippines served as a key overseas US military installation. Today, some twenty-five years after the base's closure, thousands of American military retirees have returned to Subic. Suggesting that quotidian and intimate social relations offer a dynamic place to ground political and cultural geographic analysis, I explore transnational Filipino-American relationships and marriages in contemporary Subic. Deploying ethnographic research of Subic's military retiree bars and conducting semi-structured interviews with American retirees, Filipina military wives, and bartenders and waitresses, I explore transnational belonging, ageing masculinities and American-Filipina marriages. Drawing on literature in cultural and feminist geography and interdisciplinary studies on gender and militarism, I turn to the highly specific social world of the American retiree bar to understand contemporary Subic as a crossroads of individual desire situated within wider networks of militarism, colonialism, globalization and gendered and racialized social relations.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO AN ETHNOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN MILITARY RETIREES IN BARRIO BARRETTO

During five weeks of fieldwork between July and August 2016, I conducted an ethnography to explore the social worlds of an expatriated American military retiree community in Barrio Barretto, Philippines. Barrio Barretto is a *barangay*, or district, in Olongapo City, Zambales, a city once home to Subic Bay Naval Base. For much of the latter half of the twentieth century, Subic served Cold War era American geopolitical interests as one of the largest US military institutions located in a foreign country. Interested broadly then in how Cold War era geopolitics and histories of US colonialism worked to push American and Filipino bodies together during the time Subic was operational as a US base and in the decades after the base closed in 1992, I conceptualized this project and an ethnography of this military retiree community as a way to explore the intimate legacies of historical social formations like militarism and empire.

This thesis primarily utilizes semi-structured interviews and participant observation with three groups: American military retirees, Filipina bartenders and waitresses who work in the retiree bars frequented by these retired men and Filipina wives married to or previously married to American military retirees. In this thesis, I use the everyday and intimate lives of these groups and focus particularly on those moments when lives come together in Barretto's retiree bars and in marriage. From the site of the retiree bar, I explore questions of racialized and gendered belonging in a transnational context and the production of ageing masculinities as performed by these men in retiree bars. I ask how retiree masculinity is spatially produced and facilitated by

those Filipina women who work in the bar and use ethnographic participant observation in bars to unpack the racialized and gendered power dynamics of this space. In later focusing on transnational marriages, I then ask how discrepant desires push American and Filipina bodies together into marriage before inquiring into how in performing their roles as husbands and wives, spouses experience geographical and social transformations over time.

This thesis broadly suggests that quotidian and sometimes intimate social relations shared between people offer a compelling and dynamic place to ground political and cultural geographic analysis. Drawing on literature in social and cultural geography, feminist geopolitics, geographic work on masculinities and interdisciplinary studies on both gender and militarism, I turn to the highly specific social worlds of shared Filipina-American relationships to understand contemporary Barretto as a crossroads of individual desire situated within wider networks of militarism, colonialism, globalization and gendered and racialized social relations. As many of the bodies I encountered in Barretto were first pushed together by processes of militarism I ask how the legacies of militarism and Filipina-American relationships forged during the American military era continue to influence and animate gendered and racialized interactions in social spaces and lives today some twenty-five years after the military base closed down. In turning to a formerly militarized contact zone, I explore the spatial intimacies of racialized and hierarchized belonging, masculinity, care, and transnational marriage paying attention to how this specific past continues to shape social formations today. As it turns to the quotidian and the intimate, this thesis also more broadly highlights the salience of shared social relations as sites of geographic inquiry. In this introductory chapter I introduce my study site, research subjects, terminology and research methods. I then introduce intimacy as a theoretical and methodological category, briefly reflecting on the intersection of research ethics and intimacy through the use of an ethnographic

vignette. This chapter concludes by providing a chapter breakdown of the thesis and briefly states each chapter's research question.

Study Area and Terminology

During fieldwork, I lived in Barrio Barretto, which is located some seven kilometers from the city center of Olongapo and ten kilometers from the entrance gates of the former Subic Bay Naval Base. A winding highway connects Barretto to Olongapo proper and a small mountain provides separation between the two. As it is physically separated, Barretto is also culturally distinct from the city center of Olongapo. Barretto serves as both a popular destination for local tourists from Manila and elsewhere in the Philippines drawn to its beaches and the recreational activities available inside the nearby former military base. Barretto is also visited by and better known as a destination for foreign sex tourists. Some fifteen to twenty sex tourist bars line the highway that runs through Barretto.

More importantly to my study, Barretto and the broader Olongapo region are today home to a few thousand American military retirees most of whom were stationed at or passed through Subic Bay Naval Base during their time in the military. Most of these men are married to Filipina women they either met during their military service or after moving back to the area in retirement. In addition to sex tourist bars, Barretto's highway has a handful of retiree bars frequented by retirees and staffed by local Filipina bartenders and waitresses. Later in this chapter I expand on the distinctions between sex tourist bars and retiree bars but introduce them here to set the research scene and to emphasize that Chapters Three and Four rely in large part on an ethnography of retiree bars.

Research Subjects and Interviews

(1) American military retirees

I conducted fifteen semi-structured interviews with a group I refer to as “American military retirees.” I also informally talked with a handful of others. All of the men I designate as military retirees in the thesis served in a branch of the US military, most of them during the Vietnam era or in the years after. As the term “veteran” is contested and denotes combat served in a conflict officially recognized by the US government, I largely avoid the term veteran choosing to instead denote research subjects as military retirees. Nearly all of the men I conducted formal interviews with visited Subic Bay Naval Base during their military service and a handful were permanently stationed at the base for some period of time. Those who were not stationed visited on ships during routine port visits. Our interviews usually took place in bars and restaurants and lasted anywhere from twenty minutes to an hour and a half. To conduct the majority of my interviews, I publicly approached men in bars, introduced myself and explained my research project. As my face became more recognizable in bars, men I knew occasionally introduced me to their friends thus leading to more interviews. I also visited the homes of three military retirees and interviewed one man inside his home. The youngest military retiree I encountered was in his late thirties. The majority of men I interviewed were in their sixties and seventies. Of the men I formally interviewed twelve were married to Filipina women while the other three were either currently dating or had previously dated and broken up with a Filipina girlfriend. Men met their spouses in a variety of ways both in bars and outside of them. Of the twelve men married to Filipina women, three met their spouses in bars and restaurants while the base was operational, three met in bars and restaurants when the retiree moved back, two met their Filipina wives in the US and Japan respectively before moving to the Philippines together

and one man met his wife, a former bar worker, through mutual friends at a party after retirement. I was not able to ask the other three married men how they met their wives. The largest age gap between spouses was thirty-seven years. This particular couple met in a bar after the man moved back in retirement. Contrary to popular stereotypes and my own preconceived expectations, for most of my research subjects the respective ages of husbands and wives did not significantly deviate. The largest age gaps occurred between retirees who met their spouses in bars after retirement while those who met in other ways were much closer in age and were separated by about ten years or less. While a few of the men I talked to owned bars and did work managing them, most did not work. Men's monthly source of income was a combination of military pension checks, social security for those who qualified and a military disability check for those certified as disabled.

(2) Filipina bartenders and waitresses

I formally interviewed four Filipina bartenders and waitresses, two who worked in a "hostess bar," one who worked in a "drinking bar" and one who worked in a "bar and restaurant" (distinctions I clarify in the coming pages). All of these women were in their mid-twenties. I also informally talked with four other bartenders and waitresses. All of our interviews took place in bars either during slow periods during a shift or on days off. I conducted these interviews in a mix of English and Tagalog, with the former constituting the majority of the conversation as it was widely (although not universally) spoken by the bartenders and waitresses I got to know.

In this thesis, I specifically refer to these women as waitresses and bartenders because that is the term they used to describe themselves. Men regularly referred to women employed in the retiree bar as "bar girls." Terminologies of intimate labor and sex work across academic work and in historical accounts of Olongapo prove slippery, contested and seldom uniform. When

referring to wives they met in the bar men often used phrases like “oh she worked in a bar” when I asked how spouses first met without offering a more specific job title. Of the five wives I interviewed, two had previously worked in a bar. One, Belinda, who I profile in Chapter Five described herself as a “waitress” while the other simply explained she previously “worked in a bar.”¹ In reading archival documents and literature about the navy base, women employed in Olongapo’s restaurants, bars, and discos are referred to with a wide array of descriptive categories: sex workers, prostitutes, waitresses, bar tenders, bar girls, hostesses, entertainers, and “women employed in the hospitality industry.” In Chapter Two, as I survey these archival documents I either defer to the language used in citations or use the umbrella terms “entertainers” or “hospitality workers.” Again, in Chapters Three, Four and Five I refer to the women who work in the bar today as bartenders and waitresses.

(3) Filipina wives

I conducted interviews with two Filipina spouses married to American men and three widows whose American partners had passed away. In designing this research, I was unsure how I would connect with Filipina spouses and girlfriends, correctly anticipating that I would not simply encounter them in bars. In visiting an office in Barretto during my first week that helps connect retirees to military benefit services and approved medical facilities in the Philippines, I met with an American staff member. He explained how some two years earlier he had helped conceptualize and organize a formal group and setting where Filipina widows could come together to discuss and share stories following the death of their American partner. Together with the help of some of the widows he founded what I refer to in the thesis as The Support Group.

¹ All names used in the thesis have been changed to pseudonyms.

The group met monthly and had recently expanded to include not only widows but also women currently married to American men.

The American staff member put me in touch with the group's director, Belinda, who I interviewed. Belinda also invited me to the group's monthly meeting which unfortunately took place during my last week of fieldwork. According to Belinda, and as I witnessed during the meeting I attended, the group serves as a social space where women share stories about the emotional difficulties of losing a partner. Women also regularly discuss the logistics of the death of a foreign partner. On the day of the meeting I attended they discussed the logistics of paying a hospital bill for husbands who are foreign residents and the payments necessary to formally remove a foreign body from a Philippine hospital.

A theme that emerged during my interviews with these wives was surviving partner benefits. As spouses of US military service members wives are eligible to receive compensation following the death of a husband. As this emerged as an important point of discussion in both the Support Club meeting and in interviews with men and women, in Chapter Five, I specifically focus on surviving partner benefits. At the meeting I attended I was able to set up interviews with four other women in addition to Belinda: two widows and two current wives. My interviews with wives all took place in public places—a bar, a shopping mall, an office and a meeting hall and ranged in length from thirty minutes to two hours. Nearly all interviews with research subjects—American retirees, bartenders, waitresses, and Filipina wives—were recorded with a digital recorder and transcribed upon by return to Chapel Hill, North Carolina. I also took regular field notes and thus rely on interviews, field notes and memory to reproduce moments from the field.

Figure 1: Semi-Structured Interviews Conducted:

Research Subjects	Number of semi-structured interviews conducted	Location of Interviews
American Military Retirees	15	Bars and Restaurants, Homes
Filipina Wives/Widows	5	Offices, Restaurants, Homes and Bars
Waitresses and Bartenders	4	Place of Work (during shift and on days off)

Bars and their Distinctions

As bars prove essential to my research, I briefly outline the types of bars that exist in Barretto differentiating between what I designate “retiree bars” and “sex tourist bars.” As it will become clear, retiree bars and the way they differ from sex tourist bars form a central part of the study, especially in Chapter Four. Given the importance of this distinction I introduce and differentiate both types of bars here.

(1) Sex tourist bars

I ultimately did visit three sex tourist bars with my research subjects. However, unless accompanied by a military retiree I explicitly chose not to make them central to my study looking to avoid essentializing renderings of Barretto as solely a space of sex work. Ara Wilson (2004) suggests that Western academic studies of Thailand’s sex trade are “over-represented.” For her hyper-representations of sex work in sites like Thailand produced by Western academics, “reinforce the links connecting racialized and gendered sexual services with particular developing nations” (73). Similarly Chandra Mohanaty (2003), famously argued, “much of present-day scholarship tends to reproduce particular ‘globalized’ representations of women...[including] the ubiquitous global teenage girl factory worker, the domestic worker, and the sex worker” (527). For Wilson and Mohanty writing about sex workers in places like the Philippines runs the risk of an essentialism that erases the disparate livelihoods, subjectivities

and ways of being not only for the women engaged in this work but also the thousands of others who carve out lives in a place like Barretto.²

Although they differ by locale, sex tourist bars typically consist of a large stage surrounded by individual chairs and tables where customers sit. Upon entry a customer is greeted by the *mama-san*³ usually an older Filipina woman. The *mama-san* typically leads or follows the customer to a table. On the stage a number of women are usually dancing to music. Dancers in Barretto are officially referred to as GRO which stands for Guest Relations Officers. GRO is an official government job classification and these women are required to wear an ID card at all times. This ID card certifies a clean health record and up-to-date employment registration with the local city government. Every two weeks or every month (I could never get an exact answer), GRO are required to go to a local health clinic where they are tested for venereal disease. The health clinic is a direct legacy from the US Navy. Beginning in 1974, American military officials collaborated with the Olongapo City government to implement a venereal disease control program. In order to be given a work permit to work in a bar while the base was operational women were required to register with the clinic and pass venereal disease testing, a health policy that remains to this day (Mirlao 1990; Sturdevant 1993).

In Barretto, it is illegal for dancers to dance topless or naked and GRO typically wear either short shirts and shorts or bikinis, attire which makes strikingly visible the clinic issued ID cards required to be pinned to their clothes. Foreign customers are encouraged by the *mama-san*

² Although Celine Parrenas Shimizu (2007) argues that researchers should not runaway but actively engage with culturally produced representations of hypersexuality as they inhere on Asian and Asian-American women's bodies. For Parrenas Shimizu, "any Asian/American woman who must understand her identity and her possibilities must engage hypersexuality in representation. That is, sexuality imbricates them so that Asian women must always engage it as a force for understanding the self and their relations with others who project hypersexuality upon them" (16).

³ Japanese for bar manager

to pick a GRO (or two) from the stage to invite to accompany them at a table. Customers typically order an alcoholic drink for themselves and a drink for the GRO (often mango juice or soda but sometimes alcohol). In the past, if a sex tourist wanted to take an available GRO home for the night, he would typically pay a standard and often advertised “bar fine” to the *mama-san*. While this practice may remain in place in a few bars, from what I could gather, bars have been discouraged by the government from advertising bar fines and it is now expected that men will negotiate a price directly with a GRO. Upon returning to the bar for their next shift, GRO pay the bar a portion of their earnings from a foreign client. Although prostitution in the Philippines is illegal, in Barretto it is informally decriminalized, as the law is rarely enforced. According to men I talked with bar raids by the police do sometimes occur. During bar raids the police search the bar for drugs and underage GRO and ensure that everyone working is officially registered with the city government and has an updated health card. Beyond the occasional raid, it appears that authorities do not prevent the purchasing of sex.

Nearly all sex tourist bars appear to be foreign owned (including at least one sex tourist bar owned by a former US marine). Although it is illegal for foreigners to own property in the Philippines, the men I talked with explained that foreign men circumvent this requirement by having their Filipina wives sign all official paperwork. Most sex tourist bars open in the early afternoon and stay open well past midnight. During my time in Barretto, I learned through conversations that the going rate for a bar-fine to be negotiated with a GRO for the evening was anywhere between P1,500-P2,0000 (\$35-\$45).

(2) Retiree bars

As I will expand upon later, the American military retirees I got to know mostly avoided sex tourist bars. Instead they spent the majority of their time at what I designate in the thesis as

“retiree bars.” In contrast to sex tourist bars, retiree bars cater primarily to American military retirees and other expatriate retirees who have moved to the region. Respondents regularly indicated that there was a distinct separation between the lifestyles and geographies of retirees and tourists. Retirees regularly socialized and drank during the afternoon or early evening at retiree bars, while sex tourists usually stayed out late into the night at sex tourist bars. Retirees explained that the two groups remained mostly separate from one another. The four retiree bars I visited were all owned by American military retirees and their Filipina wives. I also spent significant time at a restaurant and bar which occasionally served as a meeting hall for these men and their various organizations (and once a month for their wives.) The retiree bars and this restaurant/bar are staffed by local Filipina waitresses and bartenders. In the thesis I further differentiate and classify retiree bars splitting them into two groups: hostess bars and drinking bars.

(2A) Hostess bars

Filipina bartenders and waitresses staff hostess bars. Waitresses typically sit with men while they eat and drink, talking to them, putting in drink orders and entertaining them. Despite these flirtations, in hostess bars customers are not allowed to request or negotiate that waitresses or bartenders leave the bar and hostesses, bartenders and waitresses are not required to wear ID cards. During my time in Barretto, I visited three hostess bars, two of which were owned by American military retirees. The hostess bar I spent the most time at was called The Anchor Bar.⁴ Inside, the Anchor was quite small with a long bar and a handful of small tables. Like all of the retiree bars in Barretto, the walls were full of military memorabilia and mementos including helmets from Vietnam, guns, photos of aircraft carriers and military medals and stickers.

⁴ Like the names of research subjects, I have changed the names of the bars I visited.

The waitresses and bartenders I met at the Anchor ranged in age from twenty-one to their mid-thirties. Owned by Benjamin, a former Marine, four or five women typically worked during a shift. The bar opened around noon and closed at ten at night. The Anchor Bar had an outside table with seven chairs making it quite popular during good weather. During slow shifts waitresses would often call out to tourists or men they knew from town who were walking by, inviting them to come in for a drink. While The Anchor was a popular spot for retirees, its roadside location and inviting patio did also attract tourists.

(2B) Drinking bars

I visited three of what I designate here as “drinking bars” and regularly hung out at two (one of which also served as a popular restaurant). All three of the drinking bars I visited were US owned and the one I spent the most time at was called The Cove. Inside, The Cove one or two women tended the bar. Somewhat cramped with about six barstools, two small tables, and a dartboard, the Cove’s bartenders were not expected to sit with customers while they drank. The two bartenders I befriended at The Cove were in their early to mid-twenties. At the other two “drinking bars” I visited, bartenders and waitresses were similarly not expected to sit with customers. A twenty-one-year-old bartender who worked at The Cove explained that she preferred working in a retiree drinking bar, contrasting it with others in town by saying, “Like the other bars, the customer is allowed to *hawakan ka* (grab you). Unlike here, they respect you, this is a very good bar.”⁵ Similarly in the bar/restaurant, which I call The Canteen waitresses were not expected to sit with customers. Waitresses were the only staff members and prepared all the food and drinks themselves, usually with two workers present during a busy shift and one during non-busy hours. While expectations of customer-worker interactions differed dramatically

⁵ Her sister worked in a hostess bar across the street.

among these bars, in Chapters Three and Four I demonstrate how interactions in the more subdued drinking bars nonetheless explicitly depended on gendered and sexualized labor of its bartenders and waitresses.

Participant Observation and the Ethics of Alcohol

A few weeks into fieldwork, I was having difficulty meeting men and frustratingly scribbled into my grammatically incorrect fieldnotes “An ethnography of the bars---- do it...hang out.” Partially self-motivation and partially the realization of my failure to leverage the local retiree’s organization into multiple interviews, after writing this note I actively spent many of the following afternoons and evenings, shuffling between the three retiree bars identified earlier: The Cove (a drinking bar), The Anchor Bar (a hostess bar) and The Canteen (a restaurant/ drinking bar). Ultimately, this decision to conduct an “ethnography of bars” proved fruitful as such spaces offered an ideal location to meet men, bartenders and waitresses to interview and provided a space to witness their shared interactions.

In addition to interviews in bars I engaged in participant observation paying particular attention to and emphasizing in my fieldnotes how American men flirted and interacted with bartenders and waitresses. Participant observation, sometimes as little as a thirty minutes and other times as much as four or five hours spread out between bars granted me access to social interactions and insight not available through interviews. As participant observation complimented (or sometimes contrasted) previously gathered interview material, I also used it to inform interview questions I later asked.

Jamie Gillen (2016) argues that alcohol consumption proves essential to connecting with his research subjects in Vietnam but notes that geography as a discipline offers little framework regarding the ethics and politics of alcohol in the field. In reflecting on his own research

practices, Gillen avoids normative claims to the ethics of consumption explaining that he has no fixed ethical standards by which he chooses to either drink with or abstain from drinking with research subjects at any particular moment. Instead his decisions to drink “are based on a mixture of serendipity, how comfortable I feel at the moment of invitation or arrangement, and how I evaluate the circumstances and intentions of the person or group of people involved in a particular outing (8). During my time in Barretto, I similarly understood my own alcohol consumption as essential to my fieldwork and the research process. Most men drank during interviews and I regularly, although not always joined them. In practice, I deployed Gillen’s subjective model of serendipity, comfort and ethical circumstances in informing both my own decisions to consume and questions regarding the use of material revealed while under the influence. During field work, I turned off my tape recorder or deleted field notes a few times when men seemed particularly intoxicated but again this judgement was entirely subjective. Alcohol certainly loosened up both interviewer and interviewee and it fostered a shared social space and practice that facilitated comfort during interviews. In choosing not to consume I would have likely been denied access to the spatial practices of the bar and those intimate details revealed to me inside of it. In understanding consumption as essential to this social world, I do not seek to absolve myself of the ethical questions that might arise but like Gillen understand reflexivity as a necessary place to begin.

Intimacy, Shared Social Relations and Ethnography

As I have alluded to in this introductory chapter but will become clearer in the coming chapters, in this thesis I analytically center shared social relations between American military retirees, Filipina bar workers and Filipina wives. In doing so, I use intimacy as a concept theoretically, methodologically and thematically. In recent years intimacy has emerged as a

theoretically rich orientation for social scientists and geographers. Given this, I ground myself in the work of geographers, ethnographers and recent turns in feminist geography that use seemingly intimate, quotidian and banal fieldsites to unpack the construction of traditionally large scale social formations. Much of this work has emerged from disciplinary reconceptualizations of scale and within the sub-discipline of feminist geopolitics. Feminist geopolitics often examines how seemingly traditional geopolitical concepts are produced through everyday lived experiences. At its most basic Massaro and Williams (2013) summarize feminist geopolitics as an approach that has re-conceptualized “what counts as geopolitical” (567). Similarly Dixon and Marston (2011) note that feminist geopolitics has led to increased attention to “the diversity of attitudes, emotions and behaviors that make up the ‘matter’ of the geopolitical” (445). This engagement has led to empirical work that argues love and babies make territory in contested border regions in India (Smith 2012) and everyday decisions about wearing headscarves produce claims to urban space in a secularly and religiously divided Istanbul (Secor 2001).

Outside the purview of feminist geopolitics and geography, intimacy has emerged as an analytical concept through which scholars work to understand global processes and power relations. For anthropologist Ara Wilson (2012), intimacy allows for the exploration of familiar political concepts like capitalism and imperialism because “it is a flexible, provisional reference that emphasizes linkages across what are understood to be distinct realms, scales or bodies” (48). Ann Stoler’s (2002) historical work examined the emergence of intimate, sexual and domestic household relationships as governable sites for the colonial government in the Dutch East Indies. Stoler argues that the management of intimate and sexual relations shifted over time as “who bedded and wedded whom” had implications for the future of the empire, its settlement patterns

and the racial composition of the population (47). Similarly, Catherine Lutz (2006) suggests ethnographies can use the intimate as analytic to unravel the contingency, historical particularities and shifts of geopolitical concepts like empire, writing, “The dilemmas, contradictions, and vulnerabilities of empire are many, but it is often only in the details that they become visible” (607).

Thus in this study although belonging and masculinity, which later emerge as central themes, are not seemingly “traditional” geopolitical concepts like territory, empire or urban space, work on the intimate in geography and elsewhere helps orient studies to use the intimate to unpack power relations. In this thesis I draw on conceptualizations of the intimate as theoretical tools that justified my turn to everyday social relations. Such a turn understands spaces like the bar and its social relations as inherently political sites capable of producing senses of belonging and reproducing specific masculinities. As I prioritize the seemingly banal worlds of bars and marriages, I understand the work cited here as theoretically opening up the possibility to explore such spaces and relations as sites flush with ethnographic opportunities for geographic research.

Intimacy in research is much more than theoretical as the research process itself is a highly embodied personal experience. For Sara Smith (2016) intimacy as analytic and research method necessitates ethical considerations. She argues “while the intimate is a promising vein of inquiry for feminist geographers, it is critical to think carefully about how to approach research on intimate topics, and to attend to the challenges of intimacy both in the field and after” (135). Smith probes and asks, what does it mean to be granted access to the intimate and what are the ethical responsibilities, if any, of the researcher during and after the revelation of highly personal details? In Barretto, research subjects entrusted me with sensitive, intimate information and for

the most part welcomed me into parts of their lives. However, at times I was met with some resistance and use one particular vignette here to think through the questions raised by Smith about ethical responsibilities to research subjects.

About a week before I was scheduled to leave the field, I returned for the second time to a retiree bar owned by a former US marine. I had visited a few weeks earlier but after being introduced to the owner and telling him about my research during this first visit I sensed mistrust and felt that I would not be welcome in his bar. Having avoided the place for most of my stay I gathered the courage to venture back during my last week. This particular bar was quite popular and I was certain I would encounter American military retirees I had yet to interview inside. Upon entering, the bar's owner made eye contact with me and immediately went outside after I sat down, thus confirming my suspicions that he did not trust me. I casually conversed with another retiree for about half an hour and this man and I agreed to a formal interview to be conducted the following day. At some point during our conversation, I made reference to an emerging scandal in local provincial politics. Earlier in the day, I had heard reports that a mining company had been caught illegally mining and selling dirt to Chinese companies in a town located three hours to the north. Initial rumors suggested that some of the dirt removed was being used by the Chinese to construct artificial islands in the geopolitically contested South China Sea (Manila Times 2016). Triggered by the fact that no one else had mentioned the scandal before I did, the retiree believed I was being disingenuous about my intentions for being in town and thus lying about being a graduate student researcher. After asking the man if he had heard about the news and describing what I knew about the scandal to him, his tone immediately changed.

Bob: What are you really doing here? Why would you ask about that? Something doesn't add up about your story. Maybe there's a reason guys have been talking about you. Maybe it's a good idea if you don't visit me on Friday [for our previously agreed upon and scheduled interview].

Mike: You think so?

Bob: Especially with a comment like that, ya I think so. And maybe I should text Belinda [the local director of the Filipina wives' Support Group] and everyone else you've been hanging out with to be careful. Tell them that I don't trust you anymore and that you should probably stay away.

Mike: Bob, I'm sorry. I'm not hiding everything. It's all true. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to..."

Bob: Mike, they taught us if someone keeps blinking their eyes quickly, they're lying. It's over. Drop it. It's done. *Fuck off.*

After this encounter, terrified that Bob would text Belinda, thus closing off my opportunity to interview the group of Filipina wives and widows married to American retirees, who I had not yet had the chance to meet, I silently and awkwardly remained at the bar. Bob and I did not talk to each other for about twenty minutes. He continued his conversation with someone else and ignored me next to him while I slowly finished a plate of food, unsure of what to do next and contemplating whether I should just leave. Unprompted he then interrupted the silence, looked at me and with no further explanation said, "Mike, why don't you come by tomorrow anyway." We exchanged a few more words, I apologized again and we ultimately did meet as planned.

The next day during our interview Bob candidly admitted that he still did not believe everything about my story. He explained that he suspected I was a member of International Justice Mission (IJM), an international NGO dedicated to ending "slavery" and sex trafficking around the world. The group appears to have a presence in the Philippines in areas known for sex trafficking including Olongapo. During our meeting the next day, Bob informed me that after a quick Google search he confirmed that UNC-Chapel Hill has an active IJM campus branch and that despite his skepticism about my intentions he would still be willing to talk. I later found out that after our first encounter in the bar, he had sent a handful of text messages to his mutual

friends, including Belinda, inquiring about their own interactions with me and gauging their senses of trust in me.

Although perhaps the most dramatic exchange I shared with a skeptical retiree, this moment did not prove exceptional. Another foreigner, an Australian who I got to know via my Filipina landlord, pulled me aside one day and explained that guys around town had started talking about me with one another, asking what I was doing always walking around. He told me that the most widespread rumor suggested that I was CIA. Despite sharing a number of social interactions, the Australian remained unconvinced about my research story, explaining he would be careful about his interactions with me and that, “I really don’t care why you are here.” He advised that given the skepticism it was probably best if I “stuck to the geologist story.” An American retiree similarly admitted that his first impression was that I was an immigration official looking to crack down on men either overstaying their tourist visas or lying about their disability status to the US Veterans Affairs Office. For him “running around with that little black thing” (tape recorder) and knowing some Tagalog raised suspicion.

Research of course requires the consent and trust of research subjects. In a project that often asked for intimate details I asked strangers to open up to me and appeared to induce some anxiety in research subjects and others around town. As these anecdotes demonstrate skepticism about my intentions surfaced in this community. Despite this, I was surprised by how many of my research subjects ultimately opened up to a young stranger, but moments like the one I shared with Bob force me to continue to struggle with the research process. After my initial exchange with him I walked back into the sunlight somewhat drunk and shaken emotionally and headed to the beach hoping to reflect on what had happened. Using my cell phone as a notepad, I ended up writing field notes about how Bob was “right.” In a sense, I was somewhat

disingenuous with my research subjects. I never “lied” about who I was, always telling them that I was a researcher and student from the US, was interested in their retired lives and that if they agreed to an interview I would change their name. Nonetheless what caused me pause about Bob’s statement was that I in a sense felt an overwhelming anxiety about having “used” Bob and men like him. I reflected in those field notes on what it meant for me to ask for the revelation of intimacies only to then “use” these intimacies to produce an academic thesis (and later, I hoped, in published papers that would help in building an academic career). Post-colonial theory has pushed social scientists to be more reflexive about the research process, to consider the dynamics of power between researcher and researched and to illuminate histories where research subjects have been exploited by researchers. In my field work the lines and symmetries of power proved blurry. I worked with American retirees in a foreign country whose wealth and citizenship granted them a great degree of social status in this community. In relation to them, I was not positioned higher up in the local social hierarchy.

Returning then to Smith, while this pervasive sense of having used my research subjects has not disappeared months later as I write a thesis, I understand writing and representation as ethical practices. Like Smith, through this project I hope “to do justice to complexity” (9). Buoyed by Smith’s challenges to struggle reflexively as a researcher with how intimate social worlds are lived and experienced, I understand writing as a way to challenge and disrupt familiar and totalizing scripts, tropes and categorizations of people and places. I have convinced myself that the stories social scientists tell matter and must inform our approach to the political, cultural and the social as we attempt to untangle it. While I do not think I will ever shake the sense of using and discarding some of my research subjects in an attempt to make an academic career, I attempt to write ethnography carefully. For anthropologist Seth Holmes (2013) ethnography as

method offers researchers chances for such reflexive storytelling. For Holmes ethnography broadly weaves vignettes, critical reflection on the circumstances under which research observations were made and theoretical interpretation of participant observation. Through the craft of writing the ethnographic “readers are reminded that position, perspective, and context are always involved in the production of knowledge” (Holmes 200). For me critically and reflexively engaging the details, nuances, and the complexities of social space offers the chance “to do justice to complexity” as the research experience not only provides new perspectives to readers but also forever alters the researcher and their future engagements with teaching and living the world.

As explained here an ethics of the intimate also calls for methodological reflexivity. During fieldwork, I was granted nearly unfettered access to the bar and these social worlds. Outside of those vignettes offered here my access to American retiree bars was rarely questioned, a status largely dependent on my subject position as a white, foreign male. For the most part my access to these men and women and their social worlds via interviews was similarly unrestricted. The American men I interviewed and got to know often viewed me as a grandson-like figure with whom they shared information and offered life advice to. Many, but not all, were quite willing to talk with me. I was surprised by how much access I was granted to these men’s lives and stories as they often proved quite willing to open up to me upon our very first meeting. I received a similar willingness to participate from bartenders, waitresses and wives.

In interviews with American men, I was often privy to racist and sexist comments. I never intervened or admonished these statements or behavior, fearful that intervention would close off my access. Instead when these comments were made I either awkwardly ignored men,

sometimes nervously laughed or encouraged men to explain more. Bobby Benedicto (2014) aptly describes how his research subjects regularly revealed troubling statements to him and how this willingness to share details with him proves indicative of his own implication in the very systems of power he looks to critique. He writes, “Classist statements were routinely made in my presence with the tacit understanding that I shared the sentiments being expressed. It is out of a sense of responsibility to those who shared their views with me that I make a concerted effort here not to extricate myself from the violences I make apparent” (22). Again, my access to these stories not only reflects my positionality as whiteness, American citizenship and gender granted access but also how my research subjects made assumptions about me and my worldviews based upon these social markers. Much of Chapter Three relies on a close read of the racialized, nation-based and gendered exclusivity of the retiree bar and as mostly white American retirees assumed I shared views similar to their own, they proved willing to reveal details that helped me understand the bars racialized exclusivity.

Chapter Overview and Research Questions

Before turning to my ethnography, Chapter Two uses the archive of the late 1980s and early 1990s. As uncertainty loomed regarding the geopolitical future of US bases in the Philippines, I analyze how government commissioned studies and economic conversion plans for US military bases in the Philippines imagined Subic’s future following American military withdrawal. Drawing on sources first accessed at the University of the Philippines-Diliman library, I look to understand how economic conversion plans were marked by specific inclusions and exclusions as Filipino politicians and leaders imagined a specific economic future for Subic in the post-American military period. Chapter Three uses ethnographic research conducted in Barretto and asks how a sense of belonging for American military retirees is produced through

social interactions in the highly localized space of the retiree bar. It pays particular attention to the insularity of the bar, emphasizing how racialized divisions and hierarchies of citizenship foster insulating social worlds essential to this sense of American belonging. The fourth chapter turns specifically to the bar's gendered social relations, asking how retiree bars spatially facilitate an ageing masculinity that augments American retirees' value as men and for them is seemingly not possible in the United States. I am interested in asking how social relations work to enable the performance of this masculinity, one that I argue "extends the lifetimes" of these ageing men's masculinities. The final substantive chapter turns specifically to transnational Filipina-American marriages. In it I ask how men articulate their own desires for marriage. I find that men often draw on racialized and colonial scripts conflating Filipina bodies with care as they desire a wife who will take care of them. As wives explain their own motivations for marriage in seemingly discrepant ways as compared to their husbands, I ask how these desires cohere together in marriages that often last decades. I then examine how in embodying the gendered and expected role of the caring wife, Filipina women augmented their value as wives. In performing such gendered roles to enter into marriage, I conclude this chapter by asking how marriage proves transformative over time as it alters subjectivities, changes senses and spaces of belonging and introduces new opportunities for the Filipina wives I interviewed.

CHAPTER TWO: BASE CONVERSION: INCLUSIONS, EXCLUSIONS AND SERVICE-ORIENTED FUTURES

At the end of our formal interview I continued drinking at the bar with a military retiree in his late sixties. At some point, I brought up the 2014 case of Jennifer Laude, a twenty-six-year-old transgender Filipina sex worker murdered in Olongapo by a nineteen-year old US marine named Joseph Pemberton. The case received significant local and international attention, and I was curious as to what retirees thought about it. After I mentioned the case, the man reached into his pocket, pulled out his cell phone and showed me a picture of Jennifer, whose face I immediately recognized from the news coverage. In the photo, Jennifer was standing with a group of other women. Pointing at one of the other women, the man first identified this woman as his wife before showing me the date the photo was saved into his cell phone: October 11, 2014, the night Laude was murdered. The American told me that his wife was good friends with Laude's sister and the group had all been partying together in a nightclub on the night Laude met the US marine who later killed her in a motel.

A week after the murder the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) published the following in their Party newsletter, *Ang Bayan* (2014).

Jennifer's name is only the latest in a long list of Filipino victims of various crimes committed by American soldiers and the US military in the Philippines. In more than a hundred years of US colonization, neocolonial rule and military intervention in the Philippines, there have been myriad cases of killings, rape, massacre, robbery and plunder... There will definitely be more Jennifers who will be falling victim to various crimes and acts of violence perpetrated by American soldiers in the country.

In politicizing Jennifer's death in this way and inciting histories of colonialism and military occupation, the CPP draws here on language used by anti-base activists during the 1960, 1970 and 1980s. During this time, Subic Bay Naval Base and Clark Air Force Base, separated by some eighty kilometers, were two of the largest US military bases abroad (McCoy 2016). Following tense political negotiations in the late 1980s and early 1990s, in 1991 the Philippine Senate voted against renewing the lease on the US bases, effectively ending decades of American military presence. But on that October night in 2014, the collision of Pemberton and Laude's bodies in an Olongapo City nightclub evoked lasting images of the American era at Subic—bars, clubs and dancehalls that served American soldiers, militarized sex work and sporadic violence. Ambyanz Club, where Laude and Pemberton met is located on Magsaysay Avenue, once an entertainment district in Olongapo and less than a kilometer from the main entrance of the former naval base. Today the base has been converted into the Subic Special Economic and Freeport Zone, an economic hub oriented towards manufacturing and the provision of services to foreign companies.⁶ Some twenty-five years after American withdrawal, the hundreds of bars, restaurants and discos that once lined the streets of Magsaysay Avenue have been replaced by other enterprises-- appliance stores, hair salons, nightclubs that cater to locals, a mega mall, hotels, fast food restaurants, pawn shops, and stalls where vendors sell bootleg DVD, clothes, shoes, and other wares.

As it conjured images of the American bases era, Laude's murder also galvanized political protests. Days after the murder, women's and other leftist political groups descended on Olongapo (Datu 2014). Drawing on nationalist scripts, they explicitly linked Laude's murder with recent news of American efforts to remilitarize the Philippines. In 2012, the US and Philippine

⁶ Another of these entertainment districts, Barrio Barretto will serve as the primary ethnographic site for Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

governments signed the Enhanced Defense Cooperative Agreement (EDCA) which granted US personnel access to five Philippine-operated military bases (Whaley 2016). The re-negotiated treaty also granted increased American access to Subic, which at the time had no active Filipino armed forces and was not included in the five bases to which the US was approved access to (McCoy 2016). Following 2012, American ships began using Subic to restock and refuel, staying in port for a few days. It was during such a port call that Pemberton met Laude. Following the murder, curfews were implemented and appear to remain in place to this day, restricting American troops' access to most of the city. Echoing the discourses of anti-base activists decades earlier, after Laude's murder, political groups explicitly linked violence against the bodies of Filipina women and violations of national sovereignty to processes of US militarization.

US Bases in the Philippines

The US-Philippines Military Bases Agreement was originally signed in 1947 in the aftermath of WWII. Following the war, destruction in Manila rivaled that of the most heavily bombed European cities. In exchange for access to and a ninety-nine-year lease on military bases in the country, the US offered the Philippines some \$620 million in war reconstruction payments (McCoy 2016). American construction at Subic Bay Naval Base first began in 1952, with Subic's naturally deep harbor and nearby mountains making it an ideal place for a navy installation. To convert the setting into a viable military facility, US forces filled in swamps and moved mountains to create runways and drydocks for ships, also cutting deep caverns into the nearby mountains to store nuclear weapons. Between 1946 and 1971, the US provided the Philippines with \$704 million in military assistance and training as part of the bases agreement (ibid). This aid and the US bases in the region proved essential to US Cold War era containment policies as the bases became the primary logistical hubs for the American War in Vietnam and

US military assistance to the Philippines was used by its armed forces against communist rebellions. Re-negotiations of the original Military Bases Agreement were held in 1966 and the original ninety-nine-year lease was reduced to twenty-five years with a new expiration date of 1991 in which renewal would be contingent on a Philippine Senate vote (McCoy 2016; Bengzon and Rodrigo 1997).

In 1986, the popular uprising known as the EDSA Revolution, toppled the twenty-year dictatorship of then President Ferdinand Marcos, fostering a new political era in Philippine politics. During his regime, Marcos had been supported by the US in part for his staunch unwavering support of US bases and his anti-communist military campaigns. Thus, with the overthrow of Marcos uncertainty surrounded the future of US bases in the Philippines in the late 1980s (Quimpo and Quimpo 2012). Although newly elected President Corazon Aquino supported and campaigned for base retention, in 1991 the Philippine Senate voted twelve to eleven against extending the basing agreement and lease (Bengzon and Rodrigo 1997).

During the Marcos era and in the years that immediately followed, leftist political groups proved vocal critics of the US occupation and their government's support of the bases. As I look to demonstrate in the section that follows, in pushing the government against extension in the 1980s, these groups explicitly scripted the US military and individual soldiers as bodies that did not belong in the Philippines. After briefly examining the contentious politics of the bases in the 1980s, the rest of this chapter turns to the latter part of this decade. Anticipating potential American withdrawal, the Philippine government commissioned a comprehensive military base conversion program designed to imagine new economic enterprises for the former military bases and to assist the communities of Subic and Clark in the aftermath of the US military's possible departure. At the time these plans were commissioned, both the future of Subic and Clark and the

future livelihoods of the tens of thousands of citizens in these communities who directly and indirectly relied on the bases as a source of income were uncertain. The haziness of the 1991 Senate vote loomed in the background as these potential conversion studies and plans were carried out.

Contentious Histories

For nationalists during this era Subic and Clark manifested as visible symbols of a US imperial past and represented continued American political and economic influence in the Philippines. Advocating the expulsion of US troops and the permanent closure of the bases, anti-base activists drew on nationalist critiques of sovereignty and appealed to senses of Filipino morality, especially emphasizing the presence of prostitution in the base communities. Nationalist critiques largely drew on the presence of US troops as a form of neocolonialism and an impediment to a fully realized Filipino sovereignty. The threat of nuclear weapons also loomed large, with anti-base activists suggesting that the storage of nuclear weapons at US bases (Subic in particular) made the country vulnerable to both a Soviet attack and a potential nuclear accident. In addition to prostitution these groups also criticized the social and moral problems attributed to the presence of US troops—venereal disease, violent crime, abandoned mixed race children, gambling, drugs and alcohol abuse.

In an October 1989 issue of *Ang Bayan*, the Communist Party laid out the tenets of its propaganda movement against US bases in the country. They wrote in the newsletter, our “vital line of attack on the bases and US imperialist rule is to expose the threat to national survival posed by US nuclear weapons in the bases and the social and moral damage that the presence of those bases has wrought on our nation and people.” Writing eight years earlier and strategically

deploying language about the future of the nation-state itself the CPP wrote, “[Prostitution] degrades not only those women but the dignity of the nation itself” (February 1981, Ang Bayan).

American anti-base activist and academic Boone Schirmer (1989) noted in a pamphlet, “Probably the most immediate and obvious effect of the US bases has been their moral and social impact on Philippine life...fostered [by] the growth of prostitution of women and children, the traffic in drugs, and the introduction of the disease AIDS.”⁷ Similarly Roland Simbulan (1985) a Filipino anti-nuclear activist and academic offered, “The bases have engendered or promoted a degrading and dehumanizing social environment that erodes the cultural and moral fiber of our society. It has spawned social problems such as vice and prostitution, sexual diseases, blackmarketing, smuggling and illegal trading, drug trafficking and drug abuse, criminality and warped values” (52).

Such writing echoes the work of civil reformers and anti-militarism activists in other contexts. In places like Guam, Hawaii and Okinawa, anti-military groups have similarly drawn upon the links between colonialism, American military bases and national sovereignty (Davis 2015). Stephen Legg’s (2014) study of prostitution in 20th Century India suggests that independent reformers, charities and other members of civil society framed moral problems like prostitution as threats to the very survival of the Indian nation-state, in much the same way Filipino activists and American solidarity organizations did during the 1980s. Recently in South Korea anti-military groups strategically used the story, image and posthumous life of a Korean

⁷ Writing from Boston, Boone Schirmer was also affiliated with the Durham, NC based anti-bases group called “Friends of the Filipino People.” A collection of Boone Schirmer and Friends of the Filipino People’s writings, pamphlets and fliers are available at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Before starting graduate school, I was able to access much of this material in Madison. Tim McGloin, one of the founders of Friends of the Filipino people also provided me access to his personal archive of pamphlets, brochures and writings before I enrolled in graduate school at UNC. Most of the activist literature in this section comes from materials accessed during my time in Madison. I am grateful to Mike Cullinane for allowing me to access these documents as well as another set of anonymously donated anti-Marcos archives at UW-Madison and for connecting me with Tim McGloin.

sex worker murdered by a US service member to understand US military occupation as a violation of Korean sovereignty and the nation-state's future (Schober 2011).

A Less Hostile View in Olongapo

As groups like the CPP, Philippine based academics and solidarity organizations in America critiqued the US occupation from their respective geographic locations, Filipinos in Olongapo had a markedly different relationship with the base. The base at Subic provided some thirty thousand jobs directly. Indirectly it employed even more. During fieldwork one elderly woman in my neighborhood told me about her father, a taxi driver while the bases were operational. In Tagalog she remembered, "Money was so easy to come by during the American period." Put simply, relationships with Subic were markedly less antagonistic and instead largely supportive of the bases for those in Olongapo. As Richard Gordon, then the city's mayor, explained in 1985, "Olongapo is a company town and the company happens to be the Pentagon" (Lohr 1985). Estimates suggested that eighty-five percent of the city's economy was directly or indirectly dependent on the naval base in the late 1980s (Rocamora 1997). As I will demonstrate later in this chapter, the US government and its negotiators strategically emphasized the two base communities' economic dependence on the bases to argue in favor of base retention in the years leading up to the 1991 vote (Bengzon and Rodrigo 1997).

Amidst growing public support against the bases, the doubt surrounding the coming Senate vote, and what would be certain economic displacement if retention failed, in 1988 President Aquino created and commissioned the Legislative Executive Bases Council (LEBC) to study, propose and draft plans for economic conversions of Subic and Clark following potential American withdrawal. Chaired by University of the Philippines President Jose Abueva, in October of 1990 the LEBC released a proposal entitled *Kumbersyon Comprehensive Conversion*

Program: Alternative Uses of the Military Baselands and the Military Camps in Metro Manila.

The publication ultimately informed the government's official conversion plans. In *Kumbersyon*'s opening pages the LEBC explains it designed the plans to "maximize the economic, social and political development of the baselands and to reduce the displacement of those in base communities affected." *Kumbersyon* represents one of many private and publicly funded policy papers and conversion studies released in the late 1980s. Together these studies collectively asked: what form should military base conversion take following American departure and how should conversion best realize new economic opportunities while stemming the economic and social losses of those dependent on the bases?

Private business interests simultaneously proposed alternative visions for conversion during this time, and these private plans offered a wide range of possible solutions. One planner curiously called for the conversion of the bases into expansive papaya and pineapple plantations citing the coming of a global "pineapple shortage" (Mariano 1998), while a former military officer envisioned base conversion as a way to end political violence, calling for the government to offer portions of the baselands as cooperative land to communist and Muslim rebels who agreed to put down their arms against the state in exchange for land.⁸ In this chapter, I briefly draw on these private conversion plans (Cuyegkeng 1988, Mariano 1988, Tiu 1989, Foreign Service Institute 1989) but do so only for the manner in which their authors quantify the economic effects of a potential American pullout.

Focusing less on these more marginal private studies (and thus pineapples and communists), I instead highlight the Legislative Executive Bases Council's official plan. I also carefully read three other publicly funded studies that directly informed *Kumbersyon* and thus

⁸ The latter of which was known as the Pag-Asa settlement projected and is outlined in Diokno (1989).

official government policy. These three studies include one produced by academics at the University of the Philippines (Diokno 1989) and two from a feminist NGO tasked with informing the LEBC and government how best to assist the thousands of women working in Olongapo's bars, restaurants and hotels (Mirlao 1990, Lee 1992). In turning to these studies and ultimately the government's official conversion strategy, I look to understand how these conversion plans produced future imaginaries of a post-American military landscape for Subic. In constructing post-withdrawal Subic as a place that needed to be saved from inevitable economic displacement, I look to understand how these imagined futures (and in turn actual plans) are marked by inclusions and exclusions. As plans proposed an economically viable conversion process, the LEBC and government's way of envisioning Subic's economic future valued certain types of industries and people, like stevedores integrated into a global economy, as it simultaneously excluded others, especially former sex workers, from the conversion process. I argue that, despite intentions of a conversion process guided by social justice and minimized displacement, such an imagined future produced Subic as a landscape that reflected the government's own interests and values back to Filipino politicians. Such values and economic visions were rooted in the realization of a future Philippine nation-state's integration as a service economy into both emerging Asia-Pacific regional economies and eventually the nation-state's larger role in the global division of labor.

The Politics of Measuring Departure

In identifying Subic as a landscape that needed to be saved after withdrawal, conversion plans first measured and calculated the estimated economic costs of withdrawal. It was widely accepted that between Subic and Clark, Olongapo's geographic isolation made it more economically dependent on Subic than Angeles City depended on Clark. As a team of

researchers from the University of the Philippines explained in their 1989 study *Research Towards Alternative Uses of Military Baselands for Sustainable National Development*, Olongapo's reliance on Subic meant it would "require greater assistance in conversion" (Diokno 1989). In 1987, the US government estimated that it employed some 37,141 local Filipino laborers inside of Subic. 15,811 of these workers were considered full time employees while 21,330 were contractual workers. The US also estimated it contributed \$359.7 million directly into the local economy in 1987.⁹ In total, some 68,000 Filipino workers were employed by the US government at both Clark and Subic (USIS 1987).

These employment calculations were publicly released and made available via a small booklet published by an office in the State Department dedicated to international diplomacy. This office, the United States Information Service (USIS) titled the small booklet *Background on the Bases: American military facilities in the Philippines*. It is clear the booklet was produced to explicitly influence ongoing base debates, making employment and economic figures easily accessible. Writing its foreword, US Ambassador to the Philippines, Nicholas Platt, notes that this second edition of the booklet was specifically updated and distributed in 1987 so that policy makers, researchers and citizens could make "a full and informed evaluation of the role of the US facilities" (iv). Nearly all of the conversion proposals and conversion plans I consulted, cited these figures in their own calculations of potentially displaced Filipino base workers. It must be understood then that measuring the economic contribution of the bases was contested and explicitly political. While there was little dispute about those formally employed inside the bases and the direct contributions of military spending to the local economy, indirect employment and

⁹ USIS suggests that of these 68,000 workers 23,168 were full time, 22,834 were contract workers and 22,068 were considered "domestic and private hires."

economic contribution was widely disputed and strategically deployed to argue in favor or against retention

In vague language that is never substantiated, the USIS booklet suggests, “It is reasonable to estimate” that 3.5-4% of the Philippine GDP and the indirect employment of about 500,000 Filipinos were attributable to the US bases. Some two years later in 1989, without explanation for his inflation, Ambassador Platt suggested in a newspaper interview that US bases amounted to 7% of the country’s total GDP. In that interview, he continued “You can’t just rip that out in a year without having a disastrous effect on the economy” (cited in Diokno 1989). Across other studies and conversion plans calculations and estimates of indirect employment ranged from 199,000 (FSI 1989), 132,000 (Cuyegkeng 1988) and 120,000 (Abueva 1990). Total contribution to overall GDP ranged from 7% (Platt), 4% (Cuyegkeng 1988, Mariano 1988) to 1.9% (Diokno 1989).

As one Senator, Ernesto Herrera, asserted in 1989 to a group of political representatives and policy experts during a summer retreat dedicated to debating the base issue, “We are talking here of almost 60,000 [directly employed] workers. We multiply that by six members of the family, that is a small atomic bomb actually *kung pabayaan natin yan* (if we neglect conversion). When it explodes that will create a host of problems.” (Aquino 1990, 29).¹⁰ As studies deployed widely discrepant measures of the base’s economic impact, estimated measures of displacement and its severity proved divisive and central to arguments for and against retention. Thus, transition plans themselves and their economic calculations were politicized. As pro-base advocates played up the potential economic devastation of withdrawal, studies that proposed

¹⁰ Herrera later voted in favor of extending the bases treaty.

viable economic alternatives with calculated estimates of potential job creation contributed to the anti-base movement (Rocamora 1997).

The debate was simultaneously clouded by questions of whether or not US foreign assistance and military support would continue after possible termination. Although the US did not pay “rent” for its facilities in the Philippines, annual economic and military aid packages to the country were considered part of the bases agreement. This aid was distributed in two forms, Economic Support Funds distributed by US AID to be used for economic development like the building of roads, schools and other public infrastructure and military assistance provided to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Schirmer 1991). Those that calculated higher percentage of GDP as attributable to the bases often assumed that this aid would disappear following the termination of the bases agreement. Others (Diokno 1989) argued that US geopolitical interests would still warrant development and military aid to the country regardless of whether the US retained its bases. Between 1985-1988 the US paid the Philippines \$900 million total- \$425 million for military assistance and \$475 in Economic Support Funds. Military support funds could be used to purchase military equipment, usually from the US. It was estimated that during this period 80% of the budget of the Armed Forces of the Philippines came from the US (Schirmer 1991). In 1988 in an effort to sway political support in favor of retention, the US increased assistance to \$481 million annually (McCoy 2016).

Hospitality Workers, Conversion and Unkept Promises

Women in the hospitality industry-- sex workers, waitresses, bartenders and masseuses-- constituted the largest sector of those indirectly employed by the bases. Official Philippine government employment surveys conducted in 1988, estimated that of those workers not directly employed by the US military but still dependent on the bases sixty percent of such workers were

employed in the entertainment industry (Diokno 1989, 66).¹¹ Identifying hospitality workers as particularly vulnerable to the American pullout, the feminist NGO WEDPRO appealed and advocated for direct government support to entertainers during the transition.¹² Weary that official government narratives and conversion plans would exclude women entertainers in two self-published studies, the NGO advised the government on how best to assist women in the transition (Mirlao 1990; Lee 1992).

As conversion plans proposed varying calculations of the economic effect of withdrawal, there proved little consensus as to the exact number of hospitality workers and thus the exact number of women potentially displaced. These disparate estimates of women working in bars reflects the clandestine nature of the work, the irregularity of work itself as it depended on the coming and going of US ships and the lack of official employment records. One survey conducted in April of 1987 (FSI) estimated some 405 rest and recreation establishments in Olongapo including nightclubs, bars, massage parlors and motels. In a WEDPRO analysis conducted two years later, the NGO tallied 614 such establishments (Mirlao 1990).

Surprisingly city records offered a place to begin estimating the number of entertainers, sex workers and waitresses in Olongapo. Beginning in 1974, American military officials collaborated with the Olongapo municipal government to implement an STD control program. In order to work in a bar or restaurant, women were required to register with the city government and undergo twice monthly venereal disease testing at the Olongapo Social Hygiene Clinic. Interested in maintaining the health of its troops, the US military provided training to the local medical technicians who worked in the clinic and paid for the clinic's drugs and medical

¹¹ It is important to emphasize that these figures do not include labor performed inside the base as they only measure those industries outside the base's gates in the city of Olongapo itself.

¹² WEDPRO stands for Women's Education, Development, Productivity and Research Organization.

equipment (Miralao 1990 and Sturdevant 1993). Using this clinic's publicly available medical records, conversion plans regularly cite Hygiene Clinic registration numbers to estimate the number of women "legally working" in Olongapo. During the late 1980s, the highest of these estimates suggests that some 11,600 women were registered with the clinic (Mirlao 1990) while others put forward estimates of 9,334 (Diokno 1989) and 6,011 (FSI 1989) clinic registrations. The variation in these estimates likely reflects the months these respective authors surveyed the clinic's records. Again, it must be emphasized that such figures only represented women registered with the clinic. It was widely expected that more than ten thousand women working in the city were unregistered. WEDPRO estimated there were likely some fifty to fifty-five thousand women working in the hospitality industry in Clark and Subic in the late 1980s, (Mirlao 1990). US government figures estimated that US personnel spent about \$37.2 million on food, entertainment and other purchases in 1987 in Olongapo while on leave from their military duty (USIS 1987).

Writing in 1989 Alma Bulawan, a former sex worker then employed by WEDPRO, highlighted the uncertainty of transition and the concern that women were being neglected in government narratives, feeling that they prioritized skilled workers employed inside the base over entertainers in potential conversion plans. In a letter, she specifically calls on decision makers to consider providing assistance to women working in the hospitality industry.

In one view, the primary problem and obstacle [of American withdrawal] is the loss of jobs for the Filipino workers inside of the bases. This issue is being seriously being thought about by the government and the powerful sectors of the country. However, I wish to remind you that there are other sectors that will require alternatives if we lose the bases. These are the 9,000 women who work in the hospitality industry [in Olongapo]. That's why I would like to convey to all of you decision makers here their dire needs.¹³

¹³ Translated from Tagalog by the author (Bulawan 1989).

Speaking in 1989, LEBC Chairman Jose Abueva noted that there would certainly be economic displacement following American withdrawal. In regards to entertainers he told a group of government officials that the LEBC was “trying our hardest to curb the impact of the dislocation of the base workers and the women who are working in Subic and in Angeles” (Aquino 1990, 38). As I surveyed conversion plans, Bulawan’s understanding that skilled workers were prioritized holds true. In neglecting hospitality workers, conversion plans wrote more extensively about developing future employment opportunities for skilled workers. WEDPRO and the University of the Philippines report specifically sought to intervene into the prevailing government narrative on behalf of these women.

In advising the LEBC, the University of the Philippines report and studies carried out by WEDPRO offered specific recommendations to the government commission to abate the suffering and displacement of women entertainers, advocating for direct government economic assistance for women during the transition period. It must be emphasized that both of these groups, the commission from University of the Philippines and WEDPRO, were directly involved with the crafting of the LEBC’s final report. Chairman Jose Abueva noted that the University of the Philippines conversion plan in large part informed the LEBC’s official report and WEDPRO surveys were explicitly commissioned by and paid for by the LEBC (Aquino 1990). Simply put, these two groups had significant sway to shape the final report presented to the government but little of their recommendations regarding women ever materialized.

Using government funds WEDPRO was tasked with informing the LEBC on how to create “alternative livelihood, training and other service programs” for women” (Mirlao 1990). The NGO fully expected its recommendations to be used by the LEBC in the final conversion program (Mirlao 1990). In conducting interviews and surveys with some three hundred women

in Olongapo and Angeles, WEDPRO identified these women as disadvantaged in transition by both their lack of skills and the social stigma of being an entertainer. The report summarized, “Hence, although most in need of assistance, women entertainers tend to evoke the least sympathy from the public who may be interested in stopping prostitution but not necessarily in assisting prostituted women make the transition to other forms of employment.” (Mirlao 1990). WEDPRO advocated for the government to ensure viable employment opportunities and to provide relevant skills training and social services necessary for entertainers’ “integration and absorption into the economic activities being proposed in the Conversion Programs” (Mirlao 1990). Specific programs proposed called on funds to be used to provide credit or loans to start businesses and educational and skills training courses in fields like computer training, book keeping, business, sewing and dressmaking.

Arguing similarly, the University of the Philippines study explicitly argued that women entertainers’ dependency on the bases and lack of alternative employment opportunities placed them in a more precarious state than skilled base workers. The authors suggested that women entertainers, “certainly demand the most government attention in the conversion process” (Diokno 1989, 30). The authors called on the government to provide direct cash transfers to help women migrate after American withdrawal, as it was widely understood that most women working in the industry were recent migrants from provinces outside the area.¹⁴ Echoing the demands of the WEDPRO survey, these academics also suggested the government directly pay for skills training and provide incentives to business owners who agreed to hire former entertainment workers (Diokno 1989).

¹⁴ Although there was no discussion as to how women would be received in returning home or if there were employment opportunities for them in the provinces.

WEDPRO (Lee 1992) published a follow-up report, after the Senate terminated the bases agreement. Like their first advocacy report, the NGO called on the government to specifically provide services including cash transfers, livelihood training programs and social services for displaced women, again arguing women could not be excluded from the conversion plans. In this 1992 publication, their previously hopeful tone of serving as official advisors to the LEBC's conversion process had dissipated. The authors had realized and candidly admitted that none of their recommendations had been included in the final conversion plans presented to the government. WEDPRO's 1992 report stated, "As it is now being shown in the official conversion plans, the thousands of prostituted women will be in the last priority" (Lee 1992). Interviewed some fifteen years later, Aida Santos, a co-founder of the NGO, explained that despite promises from President Corazon Aquino's administration that the women's sector would be a priority in conversion plans, "none of the specific recommendations dedicated to improving the conditions of women were implemented" (Simbulan 2009). Sturdevant (2001) and Rocamora (1997) echo this sentiment suggesting that despite the extensive research carried out by WEDPRO, none of their specific recommendations were ever implemented in the actual conversion plan.¹⁵

Curiously in its final report, the LEBC's only substantial engagement with hospitality workers offers no concrete plans, and instead rather tepidly suggests that for women previously employed in the industry "reduced income will be compensated by self-respect and dignity" (24). In excluding those recommendations of the UP team and WEDPRO and choosing not to provide direct cash transfers, livelihood trainings and social assistance, in the next section I look to emphasize how the LEBC instead prioritized a specific future vision of Subic's role in emerging

¹⁵ Rocamora notes that the US Navy did ultimately pay its employees separation allowances, and explains "entertainment workers were the ones who suffered the most" (302).

regional and international divisions of labor. In excluding hospitality workers from conversion, the LEBC proposed a future economic vision rooted not in social welfare but rather a service oriented economy designed to attract foreign investors.

The LEBC Plan and Dead Labor

In its official plan, released in September 1991, the LEBC called for the conversion of Subic into a Maritime Industrial Complex (Abueva 1990). Designed to generate 79,000 jobs over ten years the plan imagined Subic as a hub for international container port services, ship repair and ship building facilities. In designing the industrial complex, the LEBC consulted with the British firm that facilitated Singapore's successful conversion from a British military site into an international container port terminal (Rocamora 1997). Writing the official document's foreword Chairman Abueva suggested conversion represented a moment in which, "We Filipinos, shall seize the opportunity afforded by the Asia-Pacific region as the fastest area of growth in the coming Pacific Century. We shall be true to ourselves and we shall take hold of our destiny as a people." (Abueva 1990, xv). Of interest is that the LEBC not only produced specific plans for the site of the former base itself but embedded these plans in larger discourses about the future role of the Philippine nation-state in the geoeconomic context of the Asia-Pacific region.

As proposed by the Legislative Executive Bases Council, the majority of public funds to be used for the conversion of Clark and Subic were expected to come from the real estate sale of under-utilized lands owned by the Armed Forces of the Philippines located in Metro Manila. Following this recommendation, in 1992 the Aquino administration signed the Bases Conversion and Development Act and authorized the sale of land from eleven military facilities in Metro Manila. The legislation called for fifty percent of the money generated from the sale of these Philippine owned military lands to finance the conversion of Clark and Subic into the proposed

commercial uses. Similarly this legislation, created a government agency, the Bases Development Conversion Authority (BDCA), tasked with implementing the plans put forward by the LEBC. The BDCA was thus designed to promote the economic and social development of the Central Luzon region and to encourage private sector participation in the transformation of Subic and Clark. The Conversion Act also created the Subic Bay Special Economic and Freeport Zone, and reduced taxes for businesses inside the zone. The legislation set up the former bases as exceptional customs territories to facilitate the freer flow of goods and capital and to attract foreign investors. Similarly these foreign investors and their dependents were granted special citizenship status, making them exempt from restrictions on foreigners owning businesses and land (Tadiar 2016). President Corazon Aquino's official act makes no mention of base laborers of any kind (including women) and stipulates no social programs, trainings or cash transfers for those affected by conversion (BDCA, Bases Conversion and Development Act of 1992).¹⁶

In mobilizing these explicit geopolitical and geoeconomic discourses, the Subic conversion process in part relied on the reappropriation of the physical infrastructure leftover by the American military. Writing in the context of changing labor and agricultural practices in mid-twentieth century California, Don Mitchell (2012) argues that as economic transitions take place those objects previously embedded in the landscape give "capitalist production and reproduction a trajectory; or, in other words, there is a 'path-dependency' to the future precisely because the future must contend with what is already there, already built" (167). In the context of Subic, the LEBC understood the material and materiel left behind by the US Navy as providing a "path-dependency" for the form Subic would take post-departure. Put in Marxist terms, as the LEBC envisioned Subic's future, the commission called for a re-appropriation of the US military's dead

¹⁶ Rocamora (1997) notes that the US Navy did ultimately pay its employees separation allowances, and again emphasizes "entertainment workers were the ones who suffered the most" (302).

labor. If the transition in part reflects claims to what belongs (dock workers and ship builders) and does not belong (livelihood programs for former sex workers), Subic's contemporary form signals successive rounds of geopolitical and geoeconomic investment as determined by normative visions of its economic future. I draw on Mitchell here who understands landscapes as enmeshed in and inseparable from circuits of capital to emphasize that Subic's transition is shaped by both visions of what the landscape and the nation-state ought to be and by those physical objects left behind by the Americans.

In a 2005 self-produced coffee table style pictorial book celebrating fifteen years of the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, its governing body writes, "The whole idea of Subic is so simple as it is brilliant: to turn to advantage the US \$8 billion worth of infrastructure left by the colonizers" (SBMA 2005, 64).¹⁷ A World Bank survey conducted a few years after withdrawal noted that infrastructure leftover from the Americans was valued at \$8-10 billion. Although they removed prized floating dry docks, the US Navy left massive fuel storage tanks, an airport with a runway, piers, warehouses, a container stacking yard, a power plant, water filtration and sewage systems and a communications facility with 7,000 telephone lines among other infrastructure (Rocamora 1997).

Recent work in geography (Cowen 2014) analyzes how former military bases have now become essential to organizing the logistics and maintenance of global capitalism. In short, as military capabilities, the nature of warfare and security threats have shifted and changed since the end of the Cold War, transnational logistics firms have transformed abandoned military bases, and the military infrastructure left behind into sites dedicated to organizing and enabling

¹⁷ Under the Manglapus-Schultz Agreement, of 1988 it was negotiated that the US owned all "removable" structures and technologies while ownership of non-removable buildings, structures and utility systems would be turned over to the Philippines upon withdrawal.

the circulation of goods through the world. Thus, while Subic's "dead labor", again things like the container stacking yard, runways and fuel tanks, was framed by politicians and industry leaders as essential to Subic's survival in the conversion process, this dead labor constrains the possibilities of capitalist development as it provides what Mitchell calls path-dependency. Today this path dependency has been largely realized in the Freeport Zone as the companies and firms there have re-appropriated US military infrastructure to suit their own industrial needs. But the landscape did not have to take this form. In the University of the Philippines study, the researchers wrote, "The main argument of the UP study is that the maximum utility of the bases facilities in the succeeding period lies in economic conversion and *linkage with the rest of the [Philippine] economy* (Diokno 1990, 15).¹⁸ These UP professors specifically sought to argue against the conversion of Subic and Clark into economic enclaves that would lower tariffs in special economic and manufacturing zones. For them, prioritizing foreign investment in this way would add little value to the Philippine economy, instead inviting international companies to merely produce goods to then be exported elsewhere at cheap labor costs. Ultimately despite these recommendations from the University of the Philippines for a Subic linked with the rest of the Philippine economy, the Freeport Zone today is a space oriented towards serving foreign companies and the logistical circulation of internationally produced goods. This physical form today must be understood as influenced by both the infrastructure and materiel leftover by the American military and normative visions of Subic's specific role in a regional and international division of labor, as Filipino politicians oriented and continued to produce the nation-state as a service economy in the Asia-Pacific region.

¹⁸ Emphasis my own.

Conclusion

Histories of anti-base activism, military base negotiations and economic conversion plans in the late 1980s offer some connective tissue to the ethnographic work that follows. First, this chapter provides a brief historical introduction to US military bases in the Philippines. More narrowly, this chapter subtly begins to hint at themes that will emerge in the ensuing chapters. Much like those material objects embedded in the landscape that shaped Subic's form after American departure, social relations formed between bodies during the American era simultaneously remain embedded in the landscape today. It is these contemporary social relations, interactions and relationships informed by historical interactions in militarized Subic to which the rest of the thesis turns.

In Barrio Barretto today sedimented relations of militarized sex work not only provide American military retirees with social spaces (bars) but such relations simultaneously shape how they interact in those bars today. Similarly such histories have pushed American and Filipino bodies together into marriage. And perhaps more abstractly, just as the Freeport Zone has been transformed into an economic space oriented towards the provision of services for foreign companies, in Chapters Three and Four I will demonstrate how historically hierarchized power relations inform social formations in Barretto's bars today and produce spaces where American belonging is contingent on the gendered service labor of the Filipina bartenders and waitresses who work there. Such relations reflect an economy oriented towards the service of foreign bodies at a more personal and intimate scale just as the Freeport Zone serves foreign business interests at the international geoeconomic scale.

CHAPTER THREE: RETIREE BARS AND RACIALIZED BELONGING

The next two chapters broadly ask how everyday interactions in Barretto work to produce a sense of belonging for foreign American military retirees. I begin from an unexpected yet pervasive finding that emerged during fieldwork: nearly all of the American retirees I interviewed felt as if they *belonged* in Barretto. Thus, this chapter grounds itself in asking how this sense of belonging emerges. How can it be that foreign men so seamlessly find a sense of place, create meaningful communities of friends and ultimately feel that Barretto, despite its location in a foreign country, is home? In turning to the social space of the American military retiree bar, I attempt to understand how the bar's social interactions work to produce this sense of the foreign as familiar. I argue that this belonging, in part, reflects hierarchized social relations of gendered whiteness and American citizenship as these social markers privilege and allow for the carving out of habitual and secure social spaces in Barretto. Insulating Americans from the everyday tension, cultural conflict, and social and material inequality of a militarized contact zone, Barretto's bars must be understood as both exclusive and essential to this sense of belonging.

Expanding on Chapter One's claim for intimacy's salience as a methodological and theoretical tool, in this chapter I outline a framework that understands an ethnographic pivot to the highly localized space of the retiree bar and the intimate, everyday interactions of bodies inside of it, as an ideal space from which to analyze American belonging. In this chapter and the one that follows, I turn specifically to some of these everyday interactions inside the bar. Suggesting that belonging is produced and shaped through transnational encounters, this chapter

uses race and citizenship as frameworks to understand inclusions and exclusions in the bar. In examining the insularity of the retiree bar and its routinized social worlds of leisure more broadly, I center the bar as a social space that expels local Filipinos and sometimes non-white Americans. The bar and this broader American community rooted in whiteness, masculinity, citizenship and age prove spatially essential to American belonging. Put another way, in providing the space for meaningful social relationships, leisure and friendships, American men cite the bar and its community as reasons for why they feel like they belong. But during fieldwork, I realized this belonging relied on the inclusion of some bodies and the exclusion of others. Next, the chapter argues that American belonging must also be understood relationally, in direct comparison to socially produced senses of unbelonging in the US for these militarized bodies. Thus, the final section of this chapter situates the military retirees' senses of alienation in the US, hinting at alternative spatial possibilities for these men in the Philippines, not possible or accessible to them in the US, a topic explored in more depth in Chapter Four through the lens of gender.

Why Belonging?

In designing this research, I was initially interested in exploring the coming together of American and Filipino lives through moments of mistranslation, awkward encounters, discomfoting adjustments, tales of concessions or perhaps more crudely, Filipino-American cultural conflicts. In short, I wanted to examine senses of unbelonging. I envisioned encouraging retirees to talk about those moments when living in the Philippines made them uncomfortable. Of course, I knew that life in Barretto had to have some sort of appeal-- why would thousands of men retire in a foreign country if they did not enjoy it? But I did anticipate hearing and highlighting stories of tension, of misunderstandings and perhaps some hostility as produced

along lines of racialized difference and the privileges of American citizenship. Like the politicized anti-base movements in the late 1980's that explicitly scripted US soldiers as bodies that did not belong, I anticipated some form of everyday conflict or awkwardness when American and Filipino bodies came together. I planned to analyze everyday cross-cultural interactions emphasizing those moments when Americans felt they did not belong as a way to explore Barretto as a site of contested power relations.

In talking with American men, I soon realized that I misjudged the frequency of how often I would hear of such stories. In describing their senses of belonging, moments of cultural discord rarely registered to my research subjects as significant. In describing these moments as sporadic, they chose to instead emphasize a pervasive sense of belonging, often telling me that Barretto was home. As I encouraged them to talk about those moments in the street, in the bar, at family gatherings when they felt out of place, they often looked at me confused, our interviews awkwardly stalling.

This is not to say these moments of disharmony and everyday conflict did not happen. During fieldwork, I witnessed a handful of misunderstandings and what I sensed were awkward exchanges as lives differently marked by race, citizenship, class and gender collided together. Such interactions often occurred with local Filipinos these men knew, like bartenders and waitresses. But they also happened with those civilians they did not know, strangers they encountered inside and outside the bar-- travelling salesmen and vendors, shop owners, tricycle drivers, police officers and school children, among others.

Thus as men rarely opened up about moments that made them uncomfortable, I slightly shifted my analytic approach. Rather than attempting to prioritize those moments when Americans feel out of place in the Philippines, in this chapter I begin by asking how this

pervasive sense of belonging among Americans is produced. I consider what it means that men could rarely come up with an answer to my probing of the uncomfortable. Does this mean these moments never actually happen? Or is it instead indicative of something else? As I ethnographically immersed myself into these transnational social worlds, I became interested in asking how belonging, rather than unbelonging, is produced in retirees' daily lives and in particular through transnational encounters with local Filipinos. I suggest that in part, this belonging appears rooted in the way foreign men carved out insulating social worlds, minimizing encounters with the majority of local Filipinos. For the men I got to know, belonging depended on the availability of exclusionary spaces, especially the retiree bar. As men developed friendships and relationships in the bar with other Americans and the Filipina women who worked there, they often highlighted such relationships and spaces to reiterate why they felt like they belonged. Emphasizing these spaces and these particular transnational friendships and relationships seemed to allow men to ignore other encounters of racialized and nation-based discomfort and unbelonging in both our interviews and in real life.

Mary Louise Pratt (1992) developed the term "contact zone" as a way to explore those "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination" (4). Pratt analyzed imperial travel writing in Latin America to understand contact zones as more than spaces of colonial domination and subjugation. She turned to the disparate power relations embedded in relationships to understand how colonized and colonizer and periphery and metropole became sites of exchange and appropriation that worked to co-constitute subjects and spaces on both ends of the colonial relationship.

Drawing on Pratt's work, I pay attention to relationships and encounters as sites of mutual exchange and reciprocation but ask what it means when one side of the exchange in the retiree bar is expected to accommodate, be hospitable and foster an affable sense of belonging. In the spaces of the retiree bar, uneven power relations proliferate and thus this American sense of fitting in must be understood as produced and dependent on the interactions and exchanges between American military retirees and the bar's Filipina service workers. In transnational interactions forged historically and animated today by the violence of American imperialism and militarism, hierarchies of race, unevenness of citizenship and gendered power dynamics of historical, militarized sex work, there is nothing natural about why these men so easily carve out these spaces of belonging.

Thus these next two chapters suggest that American belonging is spatially dependent and produced through the racialized, gendered and nation-based hierarchies that determine exchanges between customers and bartenders and waitresses. Reflective then of the pervasiveness of whiteness, masculinity and American empire, I also attempt to understand how these interactions are exchanges that shape lives on both sides of the encounter in perhaps surprising ways, opening up certain possibilities while closing others off.

Emergent Social Relations

In the next two chapters, I deploy a relational geography of encounters between bodies. I start from the theoretical assertion that bodies and their shared, often intimate interactions are sites where belonging can be produced, negotiated and held together, grounding much of this work in the ethnographies of Lieba Faier (2009) and Arun Saldanha (2007). Faier and Saldanha draw on but also complicate the work of Mary Louise Pratt as they ethnographically work from

within seemingly quotidian field sites to understand the construction of citizenship and belonging (Faier) and race (Saldanha).

More specifically, Faier argues Japanese culture, identity and citizenship are challenged, negotiated, protected and remade through the everyday encounters and relationships between Filipina entertainers who migrate to rural Japan and then marry local Japanese men. For Faier's Filipina research subjects, acceptance and belonging into Japanese families must be analyzed through shared cultural crossings. Rather than turning to the way foreign Filipina women negotiate state agencies and passport offices, traditionally understood as sites that legitimize citizenship and formal state belonging, Faier emphasizes a citizenship contingently held together and granted through quotidian Filipina-Japanese interactions. Her ethnography highlights moments, when for example, a Japanese mother-in-law criticizes a Filipina wife's "inauthentic" Japanese food, denying this foreign wife Japanese citizenship and belonging to the family. Thus in turning to the politics of the kitchen and a mother-in-law's expectations, Faier understands transnational encounters as highly productive sites from which to understand the contested politics of societal belonging. Her theoretical approach understands encounters between bodies as "everyday and affective cultural processes through which discrepantly situated people relationally remake their worlds" (14).

Similarly, Arun Saldanha understands race as an event that emerges on the beaches, dance floors and streets of Anjuna, Goa, India. For Saldanha, in their efforts to escape Western modernity by embracing a hippie rave dance culture, the embodied practices of white expatriates and tourists in Goa reinforce whiteness. In his ethnography of the dance floor, the "stickiness" of white bodies, formed through shared social interactions, allows white tourists to control the dance floor's momentum. The congealment of these white bodies works to simultaneously expel

domestic Indian tourists and local workers to the dance floor's corners. Thus for Saldanha, race must be grappled with as an emergent, spatial relation that can be understood, for example, by turning to the ways white bodies hold together, attract and also repel.

I emphasize the work of Saldanha and Faier here for their clear engagement with the way bodies cohere to produce inclusions and exclusions through the lenses of race and citizenship respectively. In turning to the quotidian, the intimate, the dance floor and the kitchen, their work understands dancing tourists, protective mothers-in-law, and cultural encounters as forces productive of belonging and un-belonging. Yet in prioritizing these seemingly micro-sites, Saldanha and Faier are careful not to ignore the histories and social relations of migration, colonization and political economy that pushed these bodies together.

In conducting an ethnography of these very particular, localized settings, I similarly use Filipino-American relationships in bars and later marriages, to understand Subic as a crossroads of individual desire situated within wider networks of militarism, globalization, colonialism, and gendered and racialized social relations. Turning to the intimate and the quotidian does not mean suspending history. Thus I simultaneously acknowledge that, for my research subjects, the trajectories of aircraft carriers, geopolitical wars waged by presidents and regional patterns of migration might have first served to push bodies together in the 1970s or 1980s, creating many of these men's first gendered encounters in the bar. Similarly, the same colonial and historical legacies of racialized sexual desire and spaces of militarized sex work that structured initial interactions between American soldiers and those Filipina women they first met and, in part, inform men's interactions today. Put more simply, in an ethnography that emphasizes emergent social relations as they unfold in situ through participant observation (especially in Chapter Four), historical social formations and historically produced social hierarchies matter and remain

central to this story. The challenge of ethnography is, of course, to sort through legacies and histories and contemporary social worlds and desire, making clear how they inform a present situation. Despite recent theoretical provocations in human geography to turn exclusively to the “politics of the site” and the social and material relations inside of the “site,” in part, this ethnography remains indebted to the past. It emphasizes that historical social relations matter. Even as I prioritize unexpected relationships and the everyday contingencies of encounter, again ethnographies must weave the historical with the present, animating and grounding historically situated subjects.

In recent years geographers Woodward, Jones and Marston (Jones, Woodward, Marston 2007; Woodward, Jones, Marston 2010, and Woodward, Jones, Marston, 2012) have put forward theoretical interventions calling for geographers to turn to “flat ontologies” or “the politics of the site.” Such work builds on earlier interventions that reconceptualized scale (Marston 2000) and provocative calls to expunge scale from human geography (Marston, Jones and Woodward 2005). In acknowledging the important work reconfiguring scale has done to reorient human geography and especially feminist geopolitics toward the intimate (including many of those cited in the First Chapter), in this thesis I theoretically ground myself more explicitly in the work of Saldanha and Faier than I do in adopting a politics of the “site” (Woodward et al.).

Early scalar debates were provoked by Marston (2000) and Marston, Jones and Woodward (2005). In these two papers, for Marston, Jones and Woodward scalar thought often problematically understands “large scale” political and economic formations as processes that “touch down” to shape, order and influence lives. For them, such renderings of the political dangerously occlude alternative accounts of social life and the diverse ways in which everyday actors and practices themselves produce, shape and alter these same large scale processes. Put

another way, in analyzing the diverse ways social subjects live under, cope with, are shaped by or even resist global processes and formations of power, ethnographies that adopt scalar models cover up those moments when everyday lives and encounters themselves produce these seemingly global social formations. For many feminist geographers inspired by this work, local sites and bodies are not merely repositories or sites where manifestations of global capitalism or empire touch down or take on diverse localized forms. Instead, bodies and intimate encounters themselves produce and reproduce these formations (Pratt and Rosner 2012; Mountz and Hyndman 2006). At its best this scalar work opened up a turn to the intimate for those scholars interested in feminist geopolitics.

For a number of critics, scale should not be abandoned as a concept in human geography (Moore 2008; Jones, Mann and Heley 2013; Hoefle 2006; Legg 2009; Leitner and Miller 2007). These geographers suggest that scale remains important both as a narrative device which does very real work in the world, especially as governments and other actors, including activists, deploy scale to make sense of, govern and order the social. In proceeding with this thesis then, I see little value in questioning whether or not scale ought to be “eliminated” from human geography. Instead like many of the feminist geographers cited in Chapter One, I view the scalar debates as a theoretical provocation that productively intervenes into familiar scripts that rendered bodies mere repositories to large scale processes. Thus drawing on this work, this thesis understands “global” social forces like capitalism and empire not as nebulous entities which touch down to order and shape lives but as instead contingent and reproduced through seemingly quotidian and banal social interactions and relationships.

In the years following these initial conversations, Marston, Jones and Woodward’s intervention became more expansive. Similarly looking to intervene against what they see as

constraining global-local narratives, more recent interventions orient geographers towards a site ontology. Such an approach suggests social interactions in any “site” are relationally and materially contingent and cannot be explained entirely by structures and orders imposed from outside the site (i.e. global forces). As Woodward et al write (2010), “Site ontology emphasizes the immanent, material connection between bodies and unfolding, situated practices... Each site must be understood as operating not under generalizable, universal laws but rather its own internal logics” (273). Such a maneuver emphasizes both human-human and human-non-human relations as it moves away from a subject-centered analysis to ask “what else is happening in a site?” (2012, 206). Recent work in geography has deployed this approach in wide-ranging empirical case studies (Johnson 2015, Laketa 2016, Miller 2014, Boyce 2015). Deploying the politics of the site, such studies emphasize those emotions, bodies and material objects typically marginalized in geographical work to “probe beneath what is obviously seen, felt and heard” and to understand spatial orderings and power relations (Shaw 2012).

While I read the politics of the site as a provocation to ask what else is materially and socially happening in a “site”, again in this thesis I align more clearly with the work of Faier and Saldanha introduced earlier. It seems that as site ontology turns to emergent, often unexpected social and material relations unfolding in space, it has the tendency to occlude the way that these very relations, no matter how unexpectedly they may cohere together, are the products of historical social relations (Kirsch and Mitchell 2004). I understand Saldanha and Faier’s work and their grounded ethnographic experiences as perhaps more clearly engaging with the productive capabilities of emergent social relations and interactions between bodies. Rather than over-emphasizing the spontaneity and the ever-contingent relational construction of a field site, historical social relations remain embedded in bodies, sites and materials and this subsequently

influences the politics of the site, or in my case, the bar. However, in weaving the everyday with the historical and the structural, turning to the quotidian and the intimate usefully demonstrates the way that historical social forces do not fully determine or explain why individuals act the way they do. Put another way, in ethnographically turning to the bar and the emergent social relations inside of it, while American belonging is contingent on how bodies interact on any given day as it is produced and unfolds in everyday spaces, the way bodies in Barretto respond to one another in part relies on historical social relations and hierarchized power relations. With this theoretical framing of encounters established, I turn now to these social worlds and relationships both here and in Chapter Four.

Racialized Exclusion

When first asked about why they settled in the Philippines, American men typically cited the cost of living (cheap), prevalence of English speakers (many), the large number of other retirees (also many), the weather (tropical and hot), and the presence of “beautiful women” (a topic explored more in Chapter Four). Similarly, immigration is quite manageable. Fifty-nine day tourist visas can be renewed an unlimited number of times for a small fee, some men were able to gain permanent residency or citizenship via their wives, and rumors abounded that other men were simply living illegally with little fear of ever being caught. Similarly, although some men sometimes complained about both the quality of and its bureaucratic headaches, as US veterans, most men are eligible for reimbursed medical expenses at a number of pre-approved local clinics and hospitals. For those veterans certified as disabled, Manila (about four hours away depending on traffic) provides the only Veterans Affairs medical clinic located in a foreign country.¹⁹ The clinic was first established to serve Filipino veterans who fought for the US armed

¹⁹ The clinic is located about 140 kilometers from Olongapo City. Most men hired private cars to go to appointments, a journey estimated to take about three hours via hired car. Most retirees explained that they

forces during WWII. During an interview the director of the clinic, she explained that a large percentage of patients today include the thousands of expatriated Americans in the country. At the VA, eligible men receive health services free of charge.

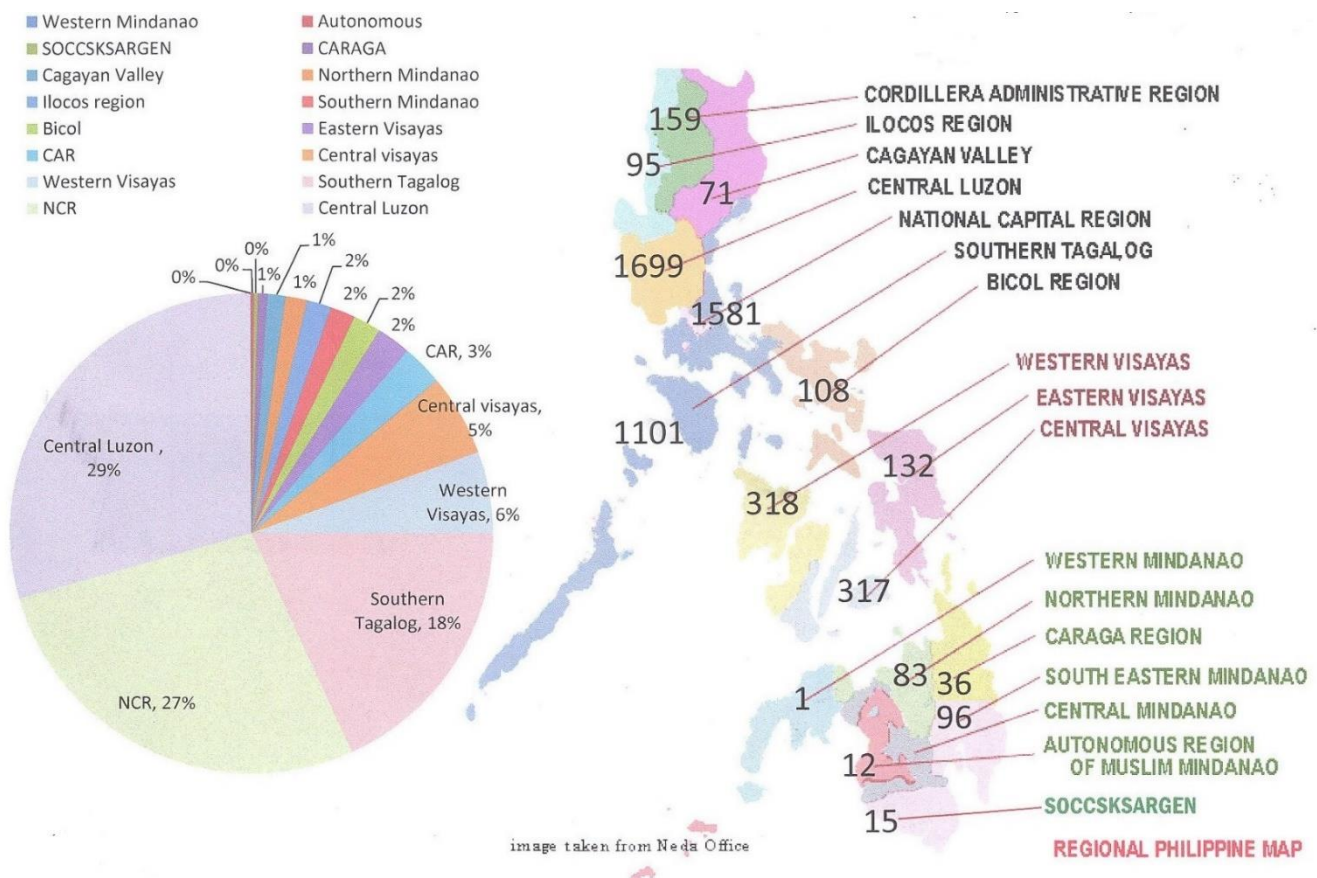


Figure 2: VA Clinic Users in the Philippines. A map provided to me by the US Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Medical Clinic in Manila. The Manila Outpatient Clinic is the only VA Medical facility located in a foreign country. This map and graph represent the home region of unique visitors to the Clinic over a one year period. This map includes American-born veterans (like many of the retirees I talked to) and Filipino citizens who served in the US armed forces. Barrio Barretto is located in the Central Luzon region where some 1,699 unique veteran visitors received medical care at the clinic. The Central Luzon region is also home to the former US operated Clark Air Force Base and the adjacent community of Angeles City, where another sizeable portion of American military retirees live.

largely avoided travelling to Manila, citing its traffic and dense population as problems they did not want to “deal with.” For more frugal travelers, a bus trip to Manila takes about four hours.

Barretto itself is home to a sizable population of foreign retirees, not limited to American military veterans. During fieldwork, I encountered expatriates from Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Sweden, Germany, Japan and Norway in addition to non-military, civilian Americans. This foreign population has left a mark on the landscape as Barretto is home to a number of restaurants that serve American style food, a German bakery and numerous foreign owned bars and hotels. Foreigners have carved out exclusive social clubs including a weekly hiking club, golf groups, dart and pool leagues, a regular trivia game, and during NFL football season, a group of fans who wake up at odd hours to watch and bet on their favorite American football teams. It soon became clear that all of these social events were exclusive to foreign men. Men also belonged to a number of charity organizations often organized around their former branch in the military (Navy, Marines, Air Force, Army). American retiree bars with televisions almost always played the Armed Forces Network, a satellite television channel with programming that seemed to be a cycle of Fox News, American sports and movies.

When I asked him why he moved to the Philippines Jackson, a seventy-year-old retiree explained,

Jackson: Well the reason I like it here... It is something I am used to. Ya, I was born and raised in the States, but over here I am used to it. I love the people, some of the stuff is funny around here. But other than that, it's not like I hate the States, I like it here. I like the climate.

Mike: You feel comfortable here?

Jackson: Oh sure

Mike: you feel like you belong, even though it is a foreign country?

Jackson: Sure. Anyplace you go, if you go someplace overseas, anyplace you go, there are people who are not going to like you. I can walk down street, I walk in the morning, and you say good morning, they ignore you, but, I just put that off. It doesn't bother me. I love the food and the people and stuff.

During an interview with Benjamin, a hostess bar owner in his mid-sixties, I encouraged him to talk about the way people from different parts of the world interacted, he explained,

Everyone gets along, of all countries, everywhere, you'll find all the retirees here so friendly, so good. And the Filipinos are so good. They treat us good. You get very few problems with anybody. As long as you stay away from areas where there are drugs, or other crap, which I have no intention to be around anyway, it is fantastic.... Most bars, everyone is friendly as hell. You just gotta stay from the bad areas where there is crime, there's something like that in every community.

The more I got to know these men, the more I learned of similarly patterned spatial routines, routines of leisure centered around two places: their home and the bar. Free of work constraints, most men described domestic idle time spent with wives, children (if they were still in the household), television, chores and beer. Although the bar will be centered more in depth in the coming pages, men regularly commented on its appeal as a space of camaraderie and friendship. More than once men joked that you could predict to the very minute when one retiree would arrive for a drink at a particular bar. As I got to know some of these men, this joke proved truer than it did hyperbolic. For some men there emerged a clockwork-like shuffling between bars, having one drink with friends in one place before heading elsewhere to meet a different bar owner, bartender or friend

In contextualizing and critically reading Benjamin's comments, retiree collegiality and these topographies of routinized leisure and belonging must be understood as insular and exclusionary. Daily lives marked by familiar ruts and well-trodden paths certainly reflect the appeal of Barretto and its numerous possibilities to carve out meaningful friendships and social worlds. However, social cohesion and friendships, developed through shared activities, drinking, playing darts, pool leagues, and telling stories to familiar faces, rely on selective inclusions and exclusions. Benjamin's suggestion "we're all family here" makes a clear delineation between members of that "family" (foreigners) and Filipinos (as service workers who "treat us so good").

The racialized, classed and citizenship-based trope “there are certain places you avoid” and the marking of Filipino spaces as places of “drugs” was a comment I heard a handful of times (often explicitly made about the predominantly Filipino neighborhood in which I lived).²⁰ Similarly, Jackson emphasizes that uncomfortable moments on the street are not from a lack of his white American gestures of neighborly friendliness and waves of good morning. Jackson then suggests how he refuses to let this unreciprocated wave bother him as he discusses belonging in Barretto. Of interest then in these moments and others I witnessed was the sense that minor tension or moments of discomfort could be ignored. Men’s routinized leisure time and familiar social worlds depended on insulation, exclusive communities and shared interactions with those they knew. In Jackson’s case, an everyday encounter of unfriendliness can be shrugged off, blame deflected to a nameless Filipino’s refusal to be friendly.

During an interview with Joann, a twenty-one year old bartender at The Cove, a drinking bar, she explained that it was an exclusively foreigner bar. The only time Filipinos entered, she told me, was when women accompanied their foreign boyfriends or husbands. When she started working in the bar some three years earlier, Filipinos were explicitly barred from entering. According to her, this policy was no longer explicitly enforced but it appeared to be an established social norm. During fieldwork I only saw locals (two young men) drinking in a retiree bar on one occasion. As the only customers inside at the time, they soon left after I

²⁰ When I told retirees where I lived, they often advised that I be careful as it was seen as a place where “drugs” proliferated. While I suggest that this was a practice that drew on exclusionary tropes it was not entirely untrue. During the five weeks I lived in the neighborhood, two men were killed by the police. Both men were identified by members of the community as known “drug pushers.” To date President Rodrigo Duterte’s drug war has resulted in the extrajudicial killing of more than 7,000 Filipinos, most of whom like the men killed in my neighborhood, were low level drug dealers from poor communities. For more information see the March 2017 Human Rights Watch report “License to Kill.”

entered. When I asked Joann why she thought Filipinos were not allowed, she explained “Filipino guys, when they are very drunk, they go crazy.”

While lines that divided Filipino and American spaces of leisure and interaction proved clear, fieldwork unexpectedly demonstrated racialized divisions inside the American community itself. Dom, a Latino retiree in his early forties, was both one of the youngest Americans I encountered and one of two, non-white military retirees I spoke with. He explained,

I've gotten shit before because of my complexion and my hair they think I'm not American because they think Americans are only white because they're inundated by all these old white guys with bald or gray hair and then they have me. And I've actually gone to a bar before where I sit down then I speak English I don't have any accent and the girls are like “you're Filipino.” “No I'm not.” And then they chase me out of the bar and I say “what the fuck, I can't just get a beer and relax?” So it's weird. They're like anti-Filipino but all these girls working in the bar the majority of them have Filipino boyfriends or husbands but they don't want Filipino customers, it's like I don't understand that.

Dom's brown skin and age initially marked him as an outsider in relation to the typical, white retiree and in his first few months this conflation of whiteness and gray hair with “American” occasionally led to his expulsion from the bar. Despite his seemingly ambiguous position, Dom was clear that once his face became more recognizable and marked as American, he was granted acceptance. Hanging out exclusively in American spaces, Dom deliberately avoided Filipino spaces. Like the bartender quoted earlier, he justified the bar's exclusionary social divisions by coding Filipino men as unruly, “I mean you're living in a foreign country so you just have to be alert to some degree. You know, don't go to places that the majority of Filipinos go. You know, you don't want to go to a Filipino bar and hang out especially when they're drunk they always want to fight. Not that I've had any altercations like that but when

they're drunk it's like they don't know how to control themselves at all, they always wanna fight and shit.”²¹

As Dom's first story suggests, racialized belonging in the bar was not solely informed by divisions of citizenship. Instead, I soon began to read the bar as a white space. During my time in the bars, Dom and his Filipino-American friend, a veteran in his late thirties, were the only two non-white retirees I ever encountered in the bar. I regularly saw black Americans in town, at the mall, and convenience store but never inside the bar. In talking with white retirees about their years in the military, stories of racialized segregation emerged and a few men occasionally made racist comments when these histories came up or in other social settings as we were discussing politics or watching American television. Once, a retiree told me unprompted that the bar we were sitting in used to have urinal cakes with Barack Obama's face on them in the bathroom. Recalling how a black retiree complained to the white veteran bar owner, the man laughed as he remembered the bar owner telling the black man that peeing on Obama's face was “not a racial matter.” Of course, such interactions not only illuminate some of these men's racist views but also reflect the racialized divisions prevalent in the military during their careers. In his history of black soldiers' experiences during Vietnam, Herman Graham III (2003) notes that Subic's nightlife was segregated. Black and white soldiers visited bars in separate areas with the black entertainment district being referred to colloquially as “The Jungle.”²²

²¹ Dom's account did not reflect my own experience during the drinking sessions I shared with Filipino men in my neighborhood who graciously welcomed me into their homes on a handful of nights.

²² Tony ran one of the few bars that catered to both Filipinos and foreigners. During the day it was primarily a drinking place for foreigners and at night offered karaoke for both locals and foreigners. When we discussed the reasons why, unlike the rest of the foreign owned bars, he allowed Filipinos in Tony explained that it allowed him to sell more beer and was strictly a business decision. Later in the discussion, I again brought up the fact that his was the only bar to cater to both locals and foreigners, hoping he might offer more detail in particular about racialized inclusion and exclusion, but he again reiterated that it simply made sense from a business perspective. Barretto had another karaoke bar that seemed to cater explicitly to locals. Similarly, local men in my neighborhood who I got to know occasionally joked about taking me to Calapandayan, a town located just up the road from

Thus notable for how American belonging both in the bar and in Barretto more broadly relied on carving out exclusively American social spaces, these spaces were also overwhelmingly white. Geographer Arun Saldanha's (2007) ethnography of the tourist spaces of Goa, India introduced earlier suggests that foreigner control of the dance floor relies on a momentum of whiteness. As white bodies cohere together exhibiting what Saldanha calls viscosity, these bodies expel domestic Indian tourists to the dance floor's corners. Saldanha is key to ground the momentum of this whiteness as not only produced in situ as bodies come together but also through shared experiences, common national histories, languages and histories of colonialism and migration. Similarly, Alexander Weheliye (2014) develops what he calls "racializing assemblages" arguing for a conception of race as "a conglomerate of sociospatial relations that discipline humanity into full humans, not quite-humans and non-humans" (3). Weheliye's project is to then understand how this categorical grouping of bodies into assemblages delimits, constrains and marks those deemed outside the category of human. For Weheliye, like Saldanha, as these categorical assemblages emerge through everyday interactions, they must be situated and rooted in historically produced and sedimented power structures. For both scholars, social relations like slavery and colonization inform how bodies cohere into racialized social formations and groupings in any particular moment. Thus as bodies on Goa's dance floors or in Barretto's bars come together, the reasons they cohere together are determined not only by the unexpected, contingency of any one moment but also historical social formations.

It seemed that both belonging in the bar and general feelings of comfort in Barretto relied on the availability of almost exclusively white spaces. Non-white customers, whether Filipino or

Barretto to watch girls dance. Unlike in Barretto, nudity is legal in Calapandayan and there are a handful of bars that cater specifically to locals. A few foreign men mentioned having visited the bars there but seemed to emphasize that they were primarily local spaces, calling the bars there "local bars."

sometimes black and Latino, posed a disruption to this belonging and the familiar routines of the bar. Of course, these spaces cannot simply be reduced to exclusively white spaces as they depended on the labor of Filipina bartenders and waitresses and on rare occasions I did encounter wives inside. But nonetheless, it seemed that social interactions, conversations, histories of segregation and discrimination in the military and occasionally the explicit intervention of Filipina bartenders worked together to maintain the bar as an overwhelmingly white space that socially excluded non-white bodies. Senses of comfort and belonging in the bar depended on its racialized and nation-based exclusivity. In the next section, I look to understand how this belonging is relationally produced to senses of unbelonging in the US.

Unbelonging in the US

During an informal conversation, Benjamin told me about his years in the US after returning from Vietnam. Recounting an encounter in the San Francisco Airport on Christmas Eve, he explained that while wearing his military fatigues “three hippies” called him a “baby killer” before the hippie woman spit onto him. Benjamin continued that “he lost it” and punched the hippie woman. Perhaps this did happen as Benjamin described it. Sociologist Jerry Lembcke (2000) has argued, however, that the “spit upon veteran” is a cultural myth with little evidence that it ever actually occurred. Like Benjamin’s story, Lembcke finds thousands of Vietnam veterans have claimed being spit on at the San Francisco Airport, often by a “hippie woman.” Lembcke traces the myth’s origin to the George HW Bush administration who first perpetuated stories of spat-upon-veterans to discredit anti-Gulf War activists in the 1990s. For Lembcke, the Bush administration strategically played up the myth of the spit upon veteran to delegitimize anti-Gulf War activists, rendering the activists unpatriotic like those fictional “spitting” anti-Vietnam protests two decades before them. Lembcke continues to suggest that this myth along

with the trope of hippies yelling “baby killer” worked to simultaneously produce a “war at home” for returning veterans. He suggests that this socially produced “war at home” is now central to veteran identities as they use it to make sense of their difficulties transitioning to civilian life and internalize a sense of abandonment by US society. Geographers Agatha Herman and Richard Yarwood’s (2014) study of the post-military lives and civilian transitions of former British soldiers suggests that highly mobile lives during careers in the service produce difficult transitions in which veterans struggle to identify a home in retirement. They find that many military retirees prefer to live in close proximity to one another, citing similarly shared interests, histories and lifestyles.

Of course the important part of this encounter with Benjamin is not that he was perhaps lying about being spit upon. Instead it is the work this “memory” does for him, providing a narrative of “unbelonging” in the US that he uses to relationally construct his sense of belonging in the Philippines. In conversations in which I asked men to explain their reasons for moving back to the Philippines, many life stories were peppered with failed marriages, divorces, dead-end civilian jobs, frayed relationships with families in the US and a desire to escape what they sensed was a decaying American political system (men seemed particularly fearful of a looming Hilary Clinton presidency).

Thus even though the spitting story is likely untrue, it seems to provide Benjamin with a target for the alienation and depression he felt in the US. Blaming a US society that failed to take care of him after the war, Benjamin was able to rationalize his marital and economic failures in the US and in part, justify his move to the Philippines, a place where this metaphorical hippie does not exist. As a body used and later discarded by an American imperial war, Benjamin locates the source of his unbelonging in part on this San Francisco hippy and thus an American

society that he feels abandoned him after Vietnam. As other men overwhelmingly described how they felt as if they belonged in the Philippines, they often did so by explicitly contrasting their lives today with senses of unbelonging in the US in the years after their military service ended. In unpacking this American unbelonging, as understood by these men through civilian jobs that offered little satisfaction, failed marriages and divorces, pension checks that could not fully support retirement, and a political system that failed to care about them as veterans and seemed to be falling apart, Barretto offered an alternative.

As Benjamin explained to me a few minutes later, for guys like him with PTSD, Barretto was a “place to heal.” In Barretto he “felt at home” in ways that he never did back in the US. Thus, in carving out a social life in Subic’s post-base landscape, it seems that these social worlds and interactions inside of the bar have worked to re-inscribe value into these American men’s lives by producing a world in which many unequivocally feel like they belong. As this chapter has demonstrated, this sense of belonging must be understood through the racialized, gendered, and classed privileges of citizenship embodied by these men. In carving out this insulated, exclusive social world, American men and their bodies draw lines of belonging that delineate who can and cannot enter the space of the bar. In championing the friendliness of other foreigners and the hospitality and accommodating nature of the Filipino bar workers who serve them, these American men simultaneously reproduce hierarchies where their belonging, dependent on gendered whiteness, expects Filipino bodies to accommodate, serve and adjust to their needs.

For men whose identities as military veterans are in part constructed through patriotism, some retirees felt the need to explain they were not abandoning their homeland. As Fox News played via satellite television and bar walls were adorned with military memorabilia, regalia, and

American flags, nostalgias of an American past intersected with new spatial possibilities in the Philippines to produce this belonging and new senses of self.

In the next section I turn specifically to gendered interactions in the retiree bar. I read the quotidian, sometimes flirtatious, and occasionally vulgar interactions and shared relationships between Filipina bartenders and waitresses and veterans in retiree bars as essential to the production of American belonging. In much the same way that senses of belonging in Barretto are relationally produced and contrasted with senses of unbelonging in the US, the spatial performance of masculinity in Barretto's retiree bars must be read relationally against the performance of masculinity in the US and these American's senses of value as men there. In the same way that Benjamin understands Barretto as a place to heal from PTSD, in the next chapter I ask how these gendered interactions of service labor in the bar and Barretto as a place spatially work to re-invigorate and reproduce these men's masculinities in contrast to the performance of masculinities in the US that mark these men as ageing and thus marginal sexual actors.

CHAPTER FOUR: AGEING MASCULINITIES AND INTIMATE POSSIBILITIES

On one of my last days in Barretto, I went jogging with a middle-aged American military retiree. As we were walking up a hill to start our run, an older foreign man with white hair and a bulging belly was walking just ahead of us, his hand intertwined with a younger Filipina woman.²³ “You want the main reason guys come back [to retire]?” he asked familiar with one of my research questions. “That right there”, he said while pointing to the couple a few yards away.

Some four weeks earlier during my first visit to a bar with a foreign retiree, I accompanied Stu, an Australian man, to a hostess bar after bumping into him at a restaurant. I met Stu on my first day in Barretto at a beach party celebrating the birthday of my Filipina landlord’s (she herself married to a retired Canadian) infant son. A week later, recognizing me from the beach, Stu asked about the progress of my research. I explained to him that I was having trouble meeting American men in public spaces.²⁴ Without hesitation, he invited me to accompany him to a hostess bar. On this particular day, a social organization of which he was a member and made up of retired military soldiers, firefighters and police officers from Britain, Australia and New Zealand was holding its weekly social event. Stu explained that the men

²³ I estimate that this man was a tourist in his late sixties or early seventies and that the woman was in her twenties or thirties.

²⁴ In relaying to Stu my difficulties meeting research subjects, I left out the real reasons for my troubles- a rainstorm that had made Barretto’s streets impassable for an entire day, two separate national holidays- one American and one Filipino holiday in the same week both of which closed an office where I had hoped to make initial contacts, and perhaps most importantly, little knowledge of the social scene which I had just ethnographically thrown myself into.

usually gathered at the bar after their weekly meeting and told me there would also be a handful of American retirees there as well. Excited to make potential interview contacts, I joined him.

After arriving, I estimated about twenty-five foreign men inside the bar (it was the biggest hostess bar I visited, catered to both tourists and retirees and was not a place I ultimately frequented). Hostesses sat with a few of the men, talking with them, occasionally bringing them new drinks while other men shot pool or watched television. The weekly gathering also served as a fundraising auction and meat raffle held to support the organization's general funds and its charity efforts. At some point during our conversation the music stopped and the man organizing the raffle announced open bidding for the chance to put a bra onto a hostess. A few minutes earlier the hostess had slipped off her bra, while keeping her shirt on, and seductively tossed it aside while dancing to music. After a good deal of laughter, the winning bid sold for 150 pesos (about \$3). An American man, the winning bidder, latched the bra behind the hostess' back while she lifted up her shirt, exposing her back. Stu described the moment as "all in good fun" and at some point candidly admitted what he understood as the appeal for foreigners living in Barretto. He asked me, "I'm 57...tell me honestly, could I get someone half my age with a middle-class salary back in Australia? My misses [wife] is 21, that's why a lot of us are here."

I bookend these two moments, the former occurring on one of my last days of fieldwork and the latter during my first time in a bar with a foreigner, because they matched how I initially envisioned my research prior to arriving. In designing this project, I conceptualized Barretto as a space where ageing foreign men were drawn to the increased access to younger women unavailable to them in the US. As these two moments reflect, in part, this was true, reifying popular depictions of Barretto as a space where foreign sex tourists and retirees meet and interact with younger women in bars. But over the course of my stay, this moment with Stu proved

somewhat exceptional. It represented one of the most explicitly sexual encounters between foreign retirees and a Filipina woman working in a bar. During my five weeks of fieldwork, when I asked American men why they returned to Barretto to retire, unlike Stu, none of them told me they were motivated by the prospect of marrying or dating a younger woman. This is not to say that some of the men I interviewed *were not* similarly motivated when they first arrived. Nor is it to deny that some of the men I interviewed and got to know were dating women significantly younger than them. But age gaps like the one between Stu and his wife proved to be more the exception than the norm. As denoted in the introduction, the majority of men were married to women much closer to their age.

In this chapter, I suggest that, in contrast to the two anecdotes provided above, retiree-bartender/waitress interactions were often not overtly sexually motivated. Retiree masculinities in the bar are not the same as tourist masculinities. In relationally contrasting retiree masculinity with spaces of sex work in this chapter, I use Filipina-American interactions in the retiree bar to examine the spatial performance of retiree masculinity. I find a masculinity that is neither held together nor dependent on explicitly sexual encounters. Instead, these transnational exchanges in the spaces of the retiree bar prove subtle and more seemingly mundane than those interactions that take place across the street in tourist bars. This is not to suggest that interactions in the retiree bar are not dependent on sexualized and racialized desire, affective and sexualized service labor, and hierarchies of gender, citizenship and social status-- they are.

Turning to these embodied relationships and encounters as they unfolded in front of me and interviews with retirees, bartenders and waitresses, this chapter then examines how the bar's everyday interactions work to reinvigorate intimate possibilities into these ageing men's lives. As most retirees were married, none of them expressed interest in pursuing relationships with

Filipina bartenders and waitresses during interviews.²⁵ Instead Filipina-American service interactions in the retiree bar work to produce casual, subtle reminders to these men of their own sexual desirability and self-worth. Seemingly informing these men they could potentially sleep with local women if they so desired, Barretto as a space facilitated the performance of a masculinity that, according to my research subjects, was not possible in the US given their subject positions as ageing veterans. Thus, I argue that retiree masculinities are spatially contingent and must be understood relationally to these men's previous lives in the US. In the US processes of ageing, internalized senses of marginalization and feelings of being left behind by US society as war veterans worked to close off intimate possibilities. In the latter half of the chapter, I use geographers' engagement with ageing as a lens to contrast the US and the Philippines, looking to understand how Barretto and its retiree bars spatially work to re-inscribe masculine vitality, suspending these processes of ageing and marginalization in the US. Coupling this work on ageing with conceptualizations of social reproduction I read these gendered and racialized encounters as embodied practices that "extend the lifetimes" of these men's masculinities, augmenting their value of and senses of what it means to be a man. This chapter concludes by turning to the lives of bartenders and waitresses, hoping to complicate them as subjects arguing that despite a theoretical orientation that understands their labor as productive and conducive to the spatial performance of retiree masculinity, their lives are far more complex than mere producers or props of American retiree masculinity.

Hostess Bars and Masculinities

Sociologist Kimberly Hoang (2015) conducts an ethnography of bars in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam by working as a hostess. In discovering that there are different types of hostess

²⁵ Although I was aware of one relationship between a retiree and a bar worker named Maria. Maria worked as a waitress in the Anchor Bar.

bars, Hoang finds that the Vietnamese women working in these bars strategically perform distinct femininities to cater to the diverse masculinities of their bar's clientele. In bars that serve Western budget travelers and Western expatriates whose unsuccessful business careers influence them to resettle in Vietnam, Hoang suggests that hostesses work to mitigate these Western men's sense of failure. For Hoang, hostesses in these Western bars exaggerate senses of financial dependence, strategically playing up an economic reliance on these men. In doing so, Hoang argues Vietnamese hostesses repair senses of failed masculinity and relay to these men Western economic superiority in the global economy.

In contrast, in high end bars that cater to wealthy local Vietnamese businessmen entertaining potential foreign investors from other parts of Asia, hostesses encourage customers to drink expensive liquor bottles, using their hospitality to facilitate a trust between trans-Asian business partners. In bars that cater to Asian men, Hoang argues, these differing hostess-client interactions portray Vietnam as a modern country worthy of both investment and inter-Asian collaborative business ventures. Thus, for Hoang these specific intimate relations work to bolster Asian men's value as businessmen reflecting back to them East Asian economic ascendancy in the global market. In turning to the intimate, Hoang specifically reads global economic relations, particularly Western decline and East Asian growth, through hostess-customer interactions, arguing that hostesses strategically perform femininities to satisfy specific men's nation-based masculinities.

Rhacel Parrenas (2011) similarly works in a Filipina hostess club in Tokyo in her ethnography. Parrenas finds that Japanese men do not frequent the club in search of sex. Instead Parrenas argues it is the hostesses' job to increase a customer's personal feelings of sexual desirability through strategic flirting and sitting with men. Rather than actually engaging in

intercourse or intimate contact, Tokyo hostess clubs re-inscribed senses of masculinity and desirability. In contrast to failed marriages and unsuccessful careers, Parrenas sees the hostess club as a space that reinforces a sense of what it means to be a man for customers whose routine jobs and marriages dull their personal senses of masculinity.

As outlined in Chapter One and much like Hoang's careful differentiation between Western and Asian bars in Vietnam, Barretto's bars catered to separate tourist and retiree clientele. Most American retirees explained that they avoided tourist bars. Retirees complained about the prices, expressed their disinterest in mixing with tourists and understood tourist and retiree spheres as two separate social worlds. Unlike the tourist bar, predicated on one-time sexual relationships, the appeal of the retiree bar relied on the way it facilitated familiarity and regular interactions with bartenders and waitresses. American men enjoyed the chance to develop sustained, meaningful relationships with other military retirees, bartenders and waitresses by frequenting the same bars daily, a few times a week or a few times a month. As described elsewhere, unlike tourist bars where twenty girls may be on stage dancing at any time, in the retiree bars there are only a handful of regular workers on any given night. It quickly became clear that such sustained relationships built over time mattered to the men who frequented the bars.

When I asked Clara, aged twenty-one and a waitress at The Anchor Bar, a retiree bar sometimes visited by tourists, about flirting with customers, she emphasized that there was a difference in how she acted with regular customers and tourists,

Clara: Yes! As you noticed, we flirt with customers but the customers are our friends already. If we flirt, we hug them, we do the flirty things because we know them.

Mike: Because you know them?

Clara: Because we already know them. It's maybe a friend, longtime friend that's why we are open to each other already. But in a first-time guy [a tourist] ...

Mike: It is different, right?

Clara: Yeah. First time customers are not always here [like regular customers].

Clara's remarks then mirrored many of the interactions regular retirees would have in the bar. Upon recognizing a regular customer, hostesses at The Anchor Bar would often get up to hug the retiree, asking what he needed and how he was. In drinking bars like The Cove and the VFW Canteen, bartenders often knew a customer's favorite drink and made small talk about family, kids and other relevant information. Thus, intimate relations in the retiree bar seemed grounded in familiarity built over time but also of flirtation.

Flirting in the bar sometimes took the form of mundane and playful comments in which retirees asked bartenders about their boyfriends, both Filipino and foreign, remarked to their friends or to me about how attractive a waitress was or teased a bartender about her English. Some men occasionally pinched waitress's legs or grabbed them around the waist as they approached a table or walked nearby. Other interactions proved more explicitly crude and sexualized. I once witnessed a retiree take off his shirt and ask for a massage at the bar, which he ultimately received. After requesting and receiving a kiss on his shirt collar from a waitress, another military retiree spent the next few minutes shamefully wiping the lipstick stain off his shirt with beer, explaining that he did not want his wife to see the lipstick when he returned home.

Other men regularly and to varying degrees of vulgarity commented on the clothing and bodies of waitresses and bartenders in my presence, usually saying something about their chest or butts and almost always within earshot of the women working. Tony and Benjamin, two American bar owners, regularly flirted with their employees and Benjamin often did so while his

wife was present, as she helped him manage the bar. During one memorable moment, Benjamin continuously slapped a ruler he was playing with on the bar's counter, yelling at one of his bartenders that he wanted to measure her "bubble butt." Tony explained to me one afternoon while smiling that one of the benefits of owning a bar was that he was allowed to have one wife and seven girlfriends, the seven girlfriends referring to the women who worked for him.

While not all retirees flirted with bartenders while I observed them, most did. Hostesses and bartenders either flirted playfully back or ignored men and their cruder remarks. Only once did I witness one American tell another that his comments had gone too far. The American scolded his friend, the same one who had received a massage a few weeks earlier, "Jesus, James, don't ask that" after the man read the brand lettering on a bartender's shirt aloud and asked, "so really, how big are your breasts?" During this particular exchange, the woman never responded or acknowledged either of them, staying busy behind the bar.

Jessie, 25 and a server at the Canteen Bar and Restaurant, had previously worked in a hotel and bar where waitresses were expected to flirt with tourist customers. During our interview conducted in a mix of Tagalog and English, I asked her to compare interactions at the two sites.

Jessie: *Oo mas marami doon. dito konti lang.* (Yes, there is more flirting over there [the tourist bar], less here.) Because most of them [retirees], they have their own wife, *mga* [their] family. So, what you need to do is entertain them. So *ano* (like), how is your family, how is your wife? Something like that.

Mike: So just like that?

Jessie: So, you're gonna do a little, a little conversation for them to enjoy and then come back here, *di ba* (right)? So that's what we're trying to do. So, *hindi naman masyado* (so it's not really) ... I think you can call that flirting, I think you can call that *parang* (like) be friendly... *Just parang inuuto mo sila* (like tantalizing, fooling them), you're medyo (*kind of*) joking with them, teasing with them, so I think it's okay.

Intimate and Spatial Possibilities

As Jessie differentiates between expectations of her as a worker in the retiree bar and the tourist bar she previously worked at, these two spaces and intimate interactions inside of them are best understood as distinct. Put simply, interactions in retiree bars were not underpinned by the pursuit of sex. Of course, this is not to suggest the absence of sensuality, arousal, and sometimes lewd behavior. Shared interactions in the retiree bar depended on the sexualized flirting, intimate conversations and racialized and objectified bodies of the young bartenders and waitresses who worked there. Jessie clearly understood flirting, teasing and making men comfortable as essential to her job as a waitress in the retiree bar even if she understood flirting as more explicit in the tourist bar.

Thus, relationally compared to the tourist bar, the retiree bar enabled, facilitated and made accessible a different performance of masculinity. As men did not constantly engage bartenders or waitresses, I read their jokes to service workers, their pinches of legs or quick grabs of waists and their occasional vulgar demands for attention as examples of emergent encounters that worked to reaffirm these men's masculinities at any particular moment. Men were not constantly pursuing attention, sexual arousal or gratification but instead seemed to seek occasional reminders that they *could* be sexually desirable. If gender and sexuality were performed in sensational ways in the tourist bar, in the retiree bar masculinity and feminized service labor proved subtler. In contrast to the tourist bars' seductive dances, one-on-one customer-client conversations and transactions of sex work, the retiree bar's flirtatious interactions seemed rooted in sexual possibility. Sexualized grabs, jokes and interactions seemed to communicate the idea to men that their own flirtations, jokes, and touches *would be* received if pursued further and *that is* what mattered.

Rather than understanding flirting as the means to a sexual relationship with a bartender or waitress, I read these moments as interactions that reflected back to these men a sense of *intimate possibilities*. Not necessarily about pursuing sex or intimacies with the individual women with which they flirted, drawing on the work of Rhacel Parrenas and Kimberly Kay Hoang, the hostess bar ethnographers introduced earlier, everyday encounters in the bar instead bolstered retirees' value as men. The space of the retiree bar thus enabled the performance of this retiree masculinity, one of flirting, playful banter, tolerated jokes and touches, comfort and a friendly, familiar environment. With no expectations of sexual relations, the intimate labor of waitresses and bartenders subtly reinforced masculine confidence and future imaginaries of intimate possibilities, even if these possibilities were rarely expected to be realized.

Geographers have convincingly argued that masculinity is a spatially produced social practice (Berg and Longhurst 2003; Hopkins and Noble 2009; and Ehrkamp 2008). As Gokariksel and Secor argue (2017), "masculinity is itself negotiated across different places, times and modalities" (15). Coupling such work with what I saw and heard during fieldwork, I soon understood Barretto as a space that facilitated a masculinity not possible in the US. While walking down the street one day and talking about transnational relationships in Barretto, the youngest retiree (in his late thirties), I met explained that most of the older men I would encounter were "fucking nobodies back home." Contrasting this marginal status in the US, he emphasized that in Barretto men could be "kings." Again, spoken of in the context of Filipina-American relationships, he perceived Barretto as a space where Americans could augment their value as men. Compared to the US, he understood Barretto as a space that inverted spatially constructed hierarchies, imbuing retirees with a social status seemingly not possible in the US transforming men from "fucking nobodies" to "kings."

In explaining his marriage, Benjamin told me, “I found someone who makes me feel very special. I’m sixty-five. I could get any spinner [young, attractive woman] in this town if I wanted to.” While I focus on transnational marriages in Chapter Five, Benjamin clearly suggests that he understands his social status as an American to be a desirable trait that grants him access to Filipina women despite his age. As a married man, Benjamin did not pursue relationships with other women but nonetheless seemed to gain value from the possibility to do so. Another man, Dom, continued to emphasize the differences between the US and Barretto through his reflection on acceptable bar behavior, explaining, “Here you can flirt with them [bartenders/waitresses], grab their asses, you do that in the States, you’re bad.”

Coupling comments like this with those interactions I witnessed in the bar, it became clear that Barretto as a space proved accessible to this ageing masculinity in ways that lives in the US did not accommodate. As men articulated personal histories of economic, social and sexual marginalization in the US-- failed marriages, divorces, post-military economic precarity-- I understood the social unfoldings inside Barretto’s bars as those which worked to augment senses of self and re-invigorate masculine value. As the social experiences of ageing and other markers of social status reduced the possibilities of and constrained chances for intimacy in the US, Barretto’s bars suspended or reversed such processes to provide intimate experiences, possibilities and opportunities between bartenders and retirees.

Barretto’s spatial possibilities and the internalized sense that it is a place where men can get away with “bad” behavior like touching bartenders must be read through their privileged position occupied by these men in Barretto’s social hierarchies. As gendered and racialized expectations for customers and service workers intersected with histories and hierarchies of colonialism and these men’s personal memories of spaces of sex work during their military

service, all of these factors coalesced together to produce spaces more conducive to the performance of an ageing masculinity not possible in the US.

Geographies of Ageing, Sexuality and Masculinity

And if Barretto offered intimate possibilities seemingly not possible in the US, age emerged as a social marker seemingly suspended in Barretto. Put more simply, in ways that perceptions of age stymie intimate possibilities for these men in the US, in Barretto Americans perceive their social status as one where age does not stunt such possibilities like it does in the US. In recent years, ageing has emerged as a promising research concept for geographers (Del Casino 2009). Such work has posited age as more than mere demographic variable, instead proposing it a socially and spatially constructed marker of identity that influences how people experience the life-course (for a review of the literature see Skinner, Cloutier and Andrews 2014s). Such work has argued that as identities and lives change over time, the process of ageing shapes spatial experiences and the construction of social worlds. Through ethnographic work, Kelsey Hanarahan (2015) examines elderly Ghanaian women's conceptions of love and care through embodied experiences of ageing. Hanarahan finds that as these "unproductive" bodies age they become alienated from familial and labor social networks and often struggle to form loving and affectionate social relations in their communities. Hanarahan's work is helpful for its attention to the "embodied ageing of later life dependencies" (214). Geographers, like Hanarahahan, who engage the spatiality and effects of ageing help to emphasize that ageing bodies carry with them different social meaning, needs and desires. As age is socially constructed, it has very real effects for the way people live, how they value themselves and how others value them.

Anna Tarrant (2010) suggests that social geographies of ageing masculinities prove noticeably absent from the discipline. In a literature review, she calls on geographers to probe how men construct their masculinity over the life course, suggesting geographers pay particular attention to how masculinity is performed in the later stages of life. Anastasia Christou (2016) echoes this dearth of literature on ageing masculinities in the discipline. Her own work turns to how ageing shapes the lives and gendered belonging of elderly, diasporic Greek-American men who retire in Greece. In moving to Greece later in life, her research subjects struggled to perform and shift between Greek and American cultural traits, feeling as if they never fully belonged to social groups of elderly Greek men in Greece or Americans in the US and the specific ways each of these groups performed their masculinities. In his study of the social effects of Viagra and ageing, Del Casino (2007) calls for a “flaccid geography.” Del Casino argues that geographers who study ageing masculinities and ageing men’s practices of sex must first deconstruct and challenge normative, phallocentric assumptions that the erection and penetrative sex are essential parts of how masculinity is constructed, especially for ageing bodies. For Del Casino, geographers ought to approach their inquiries into ageing’s effect on sexualities in ways that recognize and explore ageing, sexuality and masculinity as a set of diverse practices, not limited or reduced to penetration.

As geographers have convincingly argued that masculinity is a spatially produced social practice, they also suggest there is no one coherent masculinity, emphasizing instead masculinities must be understood as multiple and non-hegemonic (Berg and Longhurst 2003; Hopkins and Noble 2009; Gokariksel and Secor, 2017; and Ehrkamp 2008). While interactions with bartenders and waitresses were certainly appealing to customers, men did not constantly engage these women. Retirees spent much of their time in the bar eating, drinking, smoking

cigarettes, silently watching television or chatting with friends. Not all men flirted or talked to bartenders in the same way. Some rarely spoke at all and alternate masculinities were performed. Jamie, an older man likely in his sixties or seventies whom I never got the chance to interview, always sat four days out of the week at the same barstool in The Cove, largely keeping to himself, chain smoking Marlboro Reds and drinking beer. Jamie rarely talked and his only interactions with bartenders seemed to be when he ordered another round. The only lengthy conversation I had with Jamie was when he asked if I would be willing to make a donation to his blind ten-year-old son's school fundraising campaign. I have no idea how Jamie internalized his value as a man, but this brief interaction suggested that Jamie located more value in providing as a father than he did flirting with the bartenders he regularly visited.

Alternatively, during an interview with Alan, in his seventies, Alan explained that he never went to the bar anymore (we met through a mutual acquaintance who suggested we meet at the VFW Canteen). Alan had given up drinking years ago and preferred to stay at home with his wife. As I encouraged him to reflect on why he avoided the bar he explained, "Oh [it's the] same stories, I can drink more than you, I have fucked more women, I was in Vietnam, and I did this and I did that. [pause] I don't do that, I don't brag." During our interview he had a deep, hacking cough, his face was marked with red sores and he explained that he regularly ran out of money at the end of each month. His wife's large extended family was largely reliant on his pension check and the two often had difficulty saying no to relatives who asked for assistance. I emphasize stories like this not to speculate on precisely how Jamie and Alan understood and performed their masculinity, but to demonstrate that not all men in Barretto lived "like kings" on the beach, spending their days flirting in bars.

In part, such stories suggest that ageing masculinities are numerous and not uniformly performed or embodied in the same way. Thus, in a project interested in unpacking the emergent, embodied masculinities in the spaces of Barretto's bars, I must emphasize that even amongst men who largely shared the same race, nationality, age and former occupation, Barretto's masculinities proliferate. They are not just performed at the barstool. My limited access to men occludes those moments, especially in private spaces outside of the bar, when alternative ways of being a man were also performed. In the next section, I further develop how I read these spatial and bodily interactions as re-inscribing value to these lives as men, drawing on theorizations of social reproduction.

Reinvigorating Masculinities: The Bar as Social Reproduction

In a special section that examines intimate labor in Asia, Rhacel Parrenas, Hung Cam Thai and Rachel Silvey (2016) argue that as intimacy has been commodified "value is created across different domains of social relations" (4-5). In part I have framed the interactions between bartenders, waitresses and retirees as intimate, affective labor. As bartenders and waitresses understood it as their job to make men feel comfortable and flirt, affective labor clearly manifested in retiree-worker interactions. But to only read these interactions as the commodification of intimacy as exchanged for a few hundred peso notes, would miss the *something else* that seemed to undergird what I saw in the bar and how these men talked about their lives.

Parrenas et al. suggest that intimate labor, in this case smiles, jokes, playful touches, shared relationships built over time, is productive of value. Thus, I soon began to read this *something else* as the production of masculine value. As Barretto's bars spatially enabled the performance of a flirtatious masculinity, I read retiree-waitress/bartender interactions as capable

of inscribing value as a man into these lives and ageing bodies. Produced in the moment through these bar encounters, heightened senses of value as a man seemed to stay with men long after they paid their bar tab and walked out the door, and thus proved essential to belonging in Barretto.

In contrast to processes of ageing in the US, emergent social relations and encounters in the bar extended the “life-times” of these masculinities, reconfiguring identities and senses of self. In suggesting that masculine value is produced in these spaces, such a conception must read bartenders and waitresses and their intimate labor as those doing the producing. Thus, drawing on social reproduction, I ask how intimate flirtations and other interactions and relationships in the bar work to reinvigorate masculinity, adding new value to these American’s senses of themselves as men.

Feminist studies and Philippine studies scholar Neferti Tadiar (2004, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2016) draws on Marxist conceptions of social reproduction to theorize the lives of Filipina domestic laborers who work abroad. For Tadiar, these overseas domestic workers ought to be understood “not simply as reproductive labor power but as producers of valorized and valorizable ‘surplus lifetime’ for their host employers (*including extending the lifetime of its aging population*)” (2012, 792). In Marxist-feminist approaches, reproductive labor in the household is often understood through the lens of social reproduction, the physical, affective and emotional labor necessary to maintain a household, its family members and the labor power that lives there. For Marx, at its most basic, social reproduction was the daily (and nightly) work necessary to reproduce the laborer so that *he* could return to the factory gates the next day. Marx understood this process as essential for the functioning of capitalism (Meehan and Strauss 2015). As feminists have made clear, reproductive labor induces a gendered division of labor. The

burden of life's maintenance historically falls on women and is unwaged and unrecognized. In Tadiar's example of migrant domestic workers who work in the home, Filipina labor saves the time a host employer has to spend on seemingly rote, "unproductive" household labor, thus freeing up time for "productive" activities. Thus, as some migrant laborers produce "valorizable surplus lifetimes" for working professionals, others who work as caregivers for more elderly employers, "extend the lifetime" of aging populations (Tadiar 2012, 792).

Drawing then on Tadiar, and untethering conventional understandings of the Marxist concept away from the home, I use social reproduction to understand interactions in the bar. In short, coupling Tadiar with the work of other geographers who draw on social reproduction, I look to understand how social interactions in the bar and the labor of bartenders and waitresses "extends the lifetimes" of American men's masculinities as relationally compared to intimate possibilities in the US. Recent work in geography helpfully makes three interventions into conventional understandings of the concept to help open up this analytical turn to social reproduction (Mitchell, Marston and Katz 2004, Meehan and Strauss 2015; and Del Casino 2009). I draw on this work to (1) suggest social reproduction does not only happen in the home, (2) can be an embodied practice through which bodies themselves produce value as they interact through everyday processes and (3) understand consumption as socially reproductive of identities.

Geographers Katharyne Mitchell, Sallie Marston and Cindi Katz (2004) blurred the seemingly fixed spatial boundaries of production and reproduction through their exploration of reproduction as "life's work." Arguing that conventional understandings of social reproduction problematically maintained production and reproduction as two separate spheres, they find that the boundaries between home and work and production and reproduction are not rigidly distinct

but fluid. In examining the spatial practices of everyday life, Mitchell et al. argued that production does not only take place in the office or factory, nor should social reproduction's performance be solely limited to spaces like the home, school or nursing home. In short, rather than separating production and reproduction as separate spatial processes, they ought to be understood as interwoven and occurring simultaneously in the same places. More recently, Katie Meehan and Kendra Strauss (2015) have called on geographers to reconsider the salience of social reproduction, positing embodiment as a way to consider how bodies themselves produce value as they interact with one another. For Meehan and Strauss, bodies must be understood as socially reproductive as they work to maintain individuals and populations. Similarly, Vincent Del Casino (2009) argues that consumption is an everyday process of reproduction essential to identity formation. Del Casino clearly illuminates how leisure and travel represent seemingly mundane forms of consumption in which travelers "work out" their social identities and subjectivities" (2009, 215) For vacationers, travel is understood and articulated as a deserved process of rejuvenation necessary to eventually return to work and thus tourist consumption practices can be understood as socially reproductive.

Again, I draw on this geographic literature to transport social reproduction away from the exclusive space of the home to say that it can take place in the retiree bar, to argue that the gendered and sexualized bodies of Filipina bartenders and waitresses are capable of reproducing masculinities and to understand consumption as a mundane process through which identities and subjectivities are remade. Using this work to read interactions in Barretto, I began to see social reproduction as a useful framework to understand Filipina-American interactions in the bar as exchanges which re-inscribed masculinize value into these men, extending the "life-times" of their masculinities in ways not possible in the US.

However, such a conception is not without consequences. While illuminating as analytic, social reproduction borders on essentialism. In introducing waitresses and bartenders through their labor and relationships with American men, this chapter potentially reduces them to mere props, accessories and reproducers of masculinity, thus occluding the diverse capacities in which they themselves produce their own worlds, subjectivities, dreams, desires, emotions and senses of self.

In theorizing domestic workers and other “surplus populations” in the Philippines, Tadiar has looked to intervene against economically deterministic conceptions that render and define the lives of surplus populations or domestic laborers solely through their labor. Thus, her project is also one interested in locating the “remaindered forms of life-making” through which subjects like migrant workers live and maneuver through their own social worlds, as they themselves produce and reproduce their lives in ways that complicate their familiar subject positions as reproducers of others. Such work proves especially important as it recognizes the “lifetimes” of Filipina migrant workers whose ubiquity in the global imaginary often essentializes them to mere reproducers

As geographers Geraldine Pratt, Caleb Johnston and Vanessa Banta (2017), important interlocutors of Tadiar, suggest, “rendering individuals as mass or surplus populations, while theoretically illuminating, can replicate the processes of dehumanization that we criticize” (173). They read Tadiar’s work as pushing us to account “for overlooked modes of social experience and social cooperation, and for forms of life-making that elude our existing narratives” (ibid). For Tadiar (2012), the process of life making happens outside the purview of economic exchange and she argues we must break familiar scripts that often subsume life and labor, pushing “to

glimpse other orders of being and action through which discontinuous itineraries are pursued” (155).

Thus, despite focusing on American men, in conducting this research I hoped to consciously intervene against renderings of bartenders and waitresses (and as we will later see wives) as merely reproducers of or accessories to these men’s masculinity. Such an anxiety of representation was informed by Tadiar and feminist critiques of the ubiquity of the “Third World” sex worker in academic writing on gender in Southeast Asia (Mohanty 2003, Wilson 2004). Knowing I wanted to complicate the lives of bartenders and waitresses, I attempted to learn about their own stories with varying degrees of success.

During interviews with bartenders and waitresses most of our questions revolved around their jobs and friendships with American retirees. In framing my research this way, little opportunity emerged to discuss lives outside of the context of the bar. This is not to say that other shared interactions or important insight did not occur. Of particular interest was that as their labor proved essential to American men’s senses of belonging, bartenders and waitress’ own geographies of belonging, inclusion and exclusion shifted and blurred. As Clara explained, stigmatized by her labor as a woman who worked in a bar, her sense of belonging in Filipino neighborhoods corroded. Neighbors and friends made assumptions about her work, equating working in the retiree bar with sex work.

Clara: *Kasi para sa amin, ang mga Filipino, pag ikaw babae na nag-trabahao ka sa bar you are disrespecting yourself.* (Because for us, for us Filipinos, if you are a woman who works in the bar, you are disrespecting yourself)

Mike: *Naisip ang mga Filipino?* (That’s what Filipinos think?)

C: Yes. *Kaya* (that’s why), it's more easier for us to just talk with foreign guys because they...

M: They don't have the same mentality?

C: Yes. It is not a big deal for them, for you.

She then explained that those who judged her did not understand what she actually did, they did not understand that she was simply talking to customers and entertaining them. Jessie, 25, echoed this, explaining that she often goes out of her way to greet foreigners she knows on the street but that this gesture sometimes leads to her neighbors gossiping about her, asking each other why she is always with foreigners and judging her for it. She explained, “*oo mahirap* (yes its difficult), they say, oh she is with the other guy and then tomorrow another guy again. But just you're friends only, you know. So, I told them just keep your mouth shut.”

Maria, 21, who worked in the bar mentioned that she liked dating foreign men because in her eyes they were “more mature.” At the time, she was dating a former American marine in his sixties. Similarly, Jessie explained that she often enjoyed talking to foreign men to learn about their extensive travel experiences and their “different” views on the world. She also told me that after returning to Barretto from trips to the US, men often brought her and the other waitresses gifts, explicitly framing these *pasalubong* (gifts from travel) as one of the benefits of her job.

In addition to this, during our interviews and while spending time together, I learned of family histories, educational backgrounds, preferred ways to pass time while bored at work, ways bartenders and waitresses enjoyed days off and about romances-- them telling me about their boyfriends, both foreign and Filipino, and me often describing a recent break-up I had experienced in the US. Thus, more than mere economic transaction, in developing relationships together over time, bartenders, waitresses and men learned about one another, and occasionally formed friendships, bonds, sometimes relationships and more sustained connections that simultaneously corroded these women’s social ties to the neighborhoods in which they lived as friends and neighbors gossiped.

Hoping to gain more insight like this, I attempted to form relationships and spend time with bartenders and waitresses outside the bar. Maria and her friend Dani, employees at The Anchor Bar, invited me one day to the mall and hair salon in Olongapo. Dani and I both got our hair cut together, gossiping with the hairdresser while Maria looked on. We then ate pizza and they browsed the lipstick aisle of a department store at the mall, while I myself wandered the aisles. Another evening while at The Anchor Bar, I was invited to share a meal of corned beef and rice with Dani and three other employees while they took a break. We ate at the bar while customers were present (an invitation that I never saw extended to customers). Later that same night, after the last customer had left for the evening I remarked that I should probably leave as well but the waitresses invited me to stay. After dimming the lights, one of the women switched off the American country music that had been playing, turned up the speakers and switched to a Tagalog song (again something that never happened in front of customers as American music always played). I suddenly found myself in the audience of an impromptu karaoke/singing session which soon morphed into a hip-hop dance session in front of the bar's large mirrors.

These latter interactions largely proved uneventful, our conversations rarely straying beyond small talk and gossip as I learned about them and they asked about me, curious as to why a young American who knew some Tagalog was spending so much time in their bars. In contrast to the way I framed the bar in much of this section, I attempted to form relationships with bartenders and waitresses so not to simply reduce them to mere laborers who prop up, augment and facilitate this American masculinity. Sometimes this worked, other times it did not. But in being granted these small, limited glimpses into their lives, interactions in bars proved to be so much more than simply spaces that propped up this masculinity. Bars also emerged as sites of mutual exchange, clashes of culture, conversation, negotiation, sites of gendered and racialized

hierarchies and desire, mistranslation, friendship and embarrassment. I witnessed bartenders and waitresses uncomfortably tolerate, ignore and playfully laugh at comments, jokes and flirtatious touches. It also emerged that relationships simultaneously offered chances to realize and fulfill mundane daily desires and larger dreams as waitresses explained they enjoyed learning about men and their travel experience, receiving gifts and sometimes dating foreign men.

Of course, research must be bounded. But having used a concept like social reproduction, which has the potential to reduce women to mere reproducers in a gendered division of labor, in a fieldsite notorious for its contemporary social formations of international sex tourism, I had hoped to gain more insight into how these women themselves produced their own worlds-- their senses of belonging, their dreams for the future, desires, anxieties and senses of self. It is with this initial probing and acknowledgement of this chapter's limitations, that I turn to the next chapter. In the next chapter, I analyze transnational Filipina-American marriages in Barretto, hoping to provide a more nuanced look at how lives on both sides of marriage are transformed when bodies come together.

Conclusion

This chapter has looked to further unpack American belonging in Barretto, turning specifically to the gendered social interactions in military retiree bars. Social hierarchies and gendered expectations introduced to these men in Subic's bars in the 1970s and 1980s framed these Filipina-American encounters and expectations but also manifested in surprising ways some thirty years later. In learning that retiree bars and the gendered performances of retiree masculinity and service worker femininity were distinct from the spaces and interactions in the tourist bar, I suggested that Filipina-American interactions in the bar worked to imbue intimate possibilities into these men's lives. Much more than the pursuit of sex, interactions in the bar

worked to engender such possibilities. Such interactions worked to produce Barretto's bars, in part informed by these men's historical encounters in Subic, as spaces accessible and conducive to the performance of this particular masculinity. In exploring the spatiality of these masculinities, I suggested Barretto proves exceptional in facilitating these encounters. As these spaces and interactions in them produce masculine value, they re-inscribe it into these bodies, augmenting senses of what it means to be a man and mitigating processes of ageing that closed off intimate possibilities in the US. In accommodating, tolerating and tantalizing their patrons bartenders and waitresses bolster these men's capacities for intimacy and hint at potential sexual relations that never will be or are expected to be realized. As men used the bar for a wide array of social activities, dart leagues, watching television, gossiping with friends, I understood gendered interactions as one of its major appeals and thus essential to why American men feel like they belong in Barretto. However, the final section has looked to complicate these bartenders and waitress' subjectivities, suggesting briefly that they must be understood as more than mere props to American retiree masculinity. Realizing that this section is perhaps not fully realized by the limitations of my research, I turn to the next chapter and transnational Filipina-American marriages.

CHAPTER FIVE: TRANSNATIONAL MARRIAGES

Historian Vernadette Gonzalez (2015) argues that the colonial-era relationship between Filipina mestiza actress Isabel Rosario Cooper and American General Douglas MacArthur must be read through Cooper's performance of intimate and racialized labor. Cooper, then an actress and vaudeville entertainer famous in Manila, and MacArthur, the American military general, met in the colonial capital during MacArthur's posting in the Philippines. After initially returning to the US by himself, MacArthur then invited Cooper to move to Washington DC in 1930. Gonzalez suggests that the historical archive offers little analysis of Cooper's life outside of traditional biographers of MacArthur which typically cast her as a passive, sexualized, domestic mistress and thus demonstrate "the way familiar, orientalist frameworks fail Filipinas as historical subjects" (88).

Gonzalez locates MacArthur's interest in Cooper as emotional and sexual fulfillment, but complicates these traditional biographies by recognizing and naming Cooper's own dreams and desires. Rather than reading their encounter as romance or a brief fling, Gonzalez suggests Cooper's decision to move to the US ought to be understood as a carefully calculated maneuver of financial and social gain in which becoming MacArthur's mistress gave Cooper the chance to realize her own dream of becoming a Hollywood actress. Gonzalez writes, "Typecast by empire, Cooper contemplated how she might breathe new life into the restricted roles available to her" (102).²⁶

²⁶ MacArthur ultimately abandoned Cooper after three years, kicking her out of the apartment he paid for, revoking her allowance and giving her money to keep their relationship a secret as news of his alleged foreign

In this chapter, I similarly turn to intimacies forged in the contexts of US militarism encountered during my fieldwork. Broadly, I focus on the marriages between US military retirees and their Filipina wives. I use some of the stories I encountered in fieldwork to similarly understand how the Filipina women I met used the performance of intimate labor as an opportunity for upward social mobility and the fulfillment of personal desires within constraints of race, gender and empire.

As Gonzalez is careful to situate Cooper and MacArthur's divergent agendas, in the first half of this chapter I frame these marriages as encounters where seemingly "discrepant desires" and "colliding fantasies" cohere together in marriage. I borrow such analytic framing from geographer Lieba Faier (2009) and feminist studies scholar Felicity Amaya Schaeffer (2013) respectively. In short, during my time in Barretto men and women articulated different desires and agendas in justifying marriage or describing those traits they sought in a potential partner.

In the first part of this chapter, I turn to and unpack one of the most common desires I heard from men, many of whom suggested they desired a wife who would "take care" of them. Attempting to deconstruct this racialized and historical conflation of Filipina bodies with care, I then reflect on the economy of care and the exchange of military pension checks that soon emerged in my fieldwork. Interestingly as care emerged as an explicit desire for men in a spouse, it was also a phrase that regularly came up in conversations with both wives and husbands. Stories emerged of American men who both explicitly cited the caring and intimate labor of spouses as reasons to ensure wives received military pension checks following their death as well as stories of the opposite, of men who deliberately refused to provide wives with spousal pension checks.

mistress threatened his burgeoning military career. Cooper's dream never realized, she acted in a few minor Hollywood films before dying of a drug overdose in the US in 1960 (Gonzalez 2015).

In the latter half of the chapter, I turn specifically to the stories of two wives, Belinda and Tess whom I got to know in Barretto. In first examining their own desires for marriage, which differed from their deceased American husbands, I argue that like Isabel Rosario Cooper, they strategically augmented their value as sexualized objects of desire and caring wives respectively. In embodying these traits and performing these gendered roles to meet the initial expectations of the men they married, marriages served a chance to realize their own goals. However, in the final section, I suggest that framing these marriages solely as sites of exchange, while helpful in the ways outlined here, problematically occludes how marriages prove transformative over time, hiding subjective remakings not measured by upward social or financial mobility.

In much the same way Gonzalez argues Cooper strategically used her intimate and sexual labor to satisfy MacArthur's desires and augment her value as a lover, I first turn to my research subject's own desires to emphasize Filipina-American marriages as places where discrepant dreams and agendas come into "productive relation" (Faier 2009). In intentionally embodying the role of the idealized caretaker, some Filipina women, like Tess met their husband's gendered expectations of what it means to be a wife and enter into these marriages. Doing so partially provides the opportunity to realize their own objectives and ambitions. However solely framing marriages as exchanges of intimate labor or opportunities for upward social mobility or access to a pension check, fails to fully account for many of the stories I heard in Barretto. Thus, in highlighting the stories of Belinda and Tess, in the latter half of this chapter and again drawing on the work of Faier and Schaeffer, I look to understand these marriages as dynamic processes. In doing so, I focus on how marriages remake and transform subjectivities, redraw boundaries of belonging, corrode old social ties and introduce new opportunities and desires for the Filipina women who enter into these marriages. Arguing that such relationships must be complicated

beyond intimate sites of exchange, such a turn blurs the boundaries of love and obligation, hypergamy and authenticity, coercion and choice, duty and loving care, authentic and convenient, transaction and transformation. In first turning to those moments when Tess, Belinda and their husbands first negotiated their respective initial desires, turning to their lives some twenty-five to thirty years later reads marriages as sites in which subjectivities and social worlds are remade in perhaps unexpected or previously unattainable ways.

Sexualized Desire and Care

In, *Olongapo Liberty*, (Leininger 2014) a fiction book written by a US Navy veteran, the book's American sailor protagonist first visits Olongapo in 1969. The first chapter is aptly titled "Arrival", and the book vividly and salaciously introduces the city, "Nothing prepares you for Olongapo. Nothing like it exists anywhere in the States...For three days as the rumble of war faded, the siren-song of Olongapo had filled the ship, her sultry, subliminal, whispered promise calling just beyond the range of hearing, a hot, sensual sigh of passion. They went to her. The Whore. Olongapo."

During my time in Barretto, men regularly conveyed similar "sea stories" and tales of arrival when I asked about their memories of first coming to the city. Informed and structured by legacies and nostalgia of militarized sex work, in describing their initial encounters with Filipina women in Olongapo's restaurants, bars and clubs, these men reproduced images of former workers in the bar as having a cultural propensity for hypersexuality. As Alan explained in coming to the Philippines for the first time in 1973 while in his late twenties

Oh my god... You know the main gate, you walk out that main gate and there's nothing but bars. I looked down this way there was nothing but bars. I looked down that way, there was nothing but bars. Nothing but women, women, women and women...And when they told you they were going to love you all night long, they were not joking. I will give you an example, if you went with one of those girls in the morning when you wake up, [they ask] 'what do you want to do? Do you wanna fuck?

Do you want to take a bath? Do you want to eat breakfast? Do you want to smoke a J [marijuana joint]? Or do you want to do all four? What do you want to do? They do not treat you like that in the United States.

In relaying these stories to me and to those other customers within earshot, men reproduced stories that soon became familiar to me. Stories were underpinned by a sense of amazement at the availability and number of women, the exceptionality of Olongapo as a space when compared to the US, the cheapness of beer, and the sultry games that regularly took place between sailors, bartenders, waitresses and workers in the bar. In short, these explicitly sexual stories soon became familiar to me after a short time in Barretto. Such memories also perhaps reflected stories that had been passed down, swapped and altered in the retiree bar years later as much as they represented reality itself.

In contrast to this performance of rehearsed nostalgia, itself indicative of the primary form of masculinity performed in the bar, men described their contemporary lives, marriages, wives and girlfriends and their interactions with the younger bartenders and waitresses in a different manner. When describing women they knew well, men *did not* so casually reproduce hypersexualized associations of Filipina femininity. In talking about their marriages, men never equated their wives with a presumed heightened sexuality. And even though they often made crude jokes in the bar as demonstrated in the previous chapter, retirees seldom used the gendered and racialized tropes of Filipina promiscuity and sexual availability to describe bartenders and waitresses they knew and regularly visited.

My point is not to suggest that the men I got to know refused these racialized and gendered stereotypes, as their nostalgia, stories and jokes about the past clearly say otherwise. Nor is it to suggest that during their time in the military or in moving back in retirement, some of these men did not explicitly desire a Filipina wife who they presumed embodied this propensity for heightened sexuality. Later in this chapter, I explicitly analyze how Belinda, a former bar

waitress who married an American, parlayed her position as a feminized object of desire into increased material and social status. Instead, in interviews, there seemed an explicit pattern to confluences of hypersexuality with anonymity. Put another way, when making broad categorizations either through memories of sex work and intimate encounters during their military service, men did rely on colonial tropes of hypersexuality. But in talking about women with which they were familiar-- wives, girlfriends, bartenders, the partners of friends-- men drew more clearly and frequently on a separate racialized and gendered trope. During interviews when we talked about marriages and what they looked for in a wife, men more often equated Filipina femininity with care. In discursively producing wives as idealized caretakers far more often than they talked about sex or presumed sexual promiscuity, I suggest that care as analytic proves of more value to understanding how lives come together.

In the interview introduced above, when I asked Alan about his arrival in Olongapo, he fondly remembered the sex but also the baths, the cooking of breakfast and shared marijuana. He described this relationship with an anonymous Filipina woman as not possible in the US. Thus even as my leading interview question encouraged him to tread the familiar rhetorical path of sex, bars and the availability of women, Alan hints at something more. I argue here that as much as it is about sex, his memory also tells of a caring relationship seemingly unattainable in the US. Again, this has to be understood as sexual but not exclusively so. In such a memory and in talking about their contemporary relationships with their wives, I argue, Alan and American men like him, draw on historically rooted and contemporary racialized constructions of Filipina femininity to produce their wives and the wives of others as idealized caretakers.

During my conversation with him Dom explained,

But here in the Philippines they're still down to those traditional roles, when you have a Filipina *girlfriend she will take care of you She will take care of you*. She will cook, clean. She will definitely fall into what

we call like traditional roles. And then it goes back to the man is the provider. I mean I even had that when I was in Mindanao.²⁷ I had a girlfriend when I was down there. And every Saturday we would go back to the beach area. Her and her friends and those girls would always cook for us. So, we would go out there and have a good time.

Later in the same conversation, Dom explained to me regarding Filipina girlfriends, “There’s good girlfriends and there’s bad girlfriends. You’ve got *some who will take care of you and others who don’t.*” In these two quotes Dom suggests that an appealing trait of Filipina wives and girlfriends was their perceived disposition to care. Drawing on homogenizing discourses that equated Filipina femininity with traditional gender roles, many of the men I encountered in Barretto, like Dom, regularly made statements like this whenever we talked about marriage, wives and girlfriends. As hinted at in Dom’s first quote, appeals to Filipina femininity as more in line with traditional gender roles were often made in direct comparison to American women, who were discursively constructed as less traditionally “feminine.” During fieldwork, American retirees described Filipina women as fiercely loyal and dedicated, constructing them as more naturally predisposed to be caring wives than American women. During my interview with the retiree in prison I introduced in the last chapter, he explained that he moved to the Philippines “to find a woman who would take care of me.” Given the frequency with which the term care was repeated I soon understood that it was a trait that many men desired in partners.

Discourses and Idealized Caretakers

Academic work, largely in the context of Filipina domestic workers abroad illustrates how the bodies of certain Filipina women have become synonymous with gendered and

²⁷ Mindanao is the name of the southernmost major island in the Philippines and is historically home to a significant Muslim population. During the Bush administration’s so called War on Terror, the US sent a number of military “advisors” to Mindanao. Dom was an “advisor” and explained to me that as an “advisor” he was not allowed to engage “enemy” combatants. Using drones in Mindanao, Dom provided intelligence to the Armed Forces of the Philippines about where to carry out attacks against enemy troops.

racialized notions of care and caretaking on the global scale. In short, gendered and racialized constructions of Filipina femininity intersect with colonial histories, contemporary divisions of labor and gendered migration to produce migrant Filipina women as the ideal care worker. This literature shows the diverse processes that work to discursively produce Filipina women as possessing an innate capacity to care but clearly delineates these predispositions for care as not natural but socially and culturally produced.

In her ethnographic work with migrant Filipina domestic workers in Rome and Los Angeles, Rhacel Parrenas (2001) suggested that international Filipina domestic workers “are the global servants of late capitalism” (243). Inspired by Parrenas’ work²⁸, Arlie Hochschild (2009) conceptualized the “global chain of care” to describe how the caring and affective labor of women from the Global South, and in particular the Philippines, metaphorically represent the world’s “new gold.” For Hochschild care and love are akin to an imperial resource extracted and brought to the Global North as changing labor markets produce a household care deficit filled by these domestic workers from the South. Citing the Philippine state’s reliance on remittances from workers abroad, many of them workers in the service and domestic household industries, Robyn Rodriguez (2010) classifies the Philippines as a “labor brokerage state.” Today, remittances from overseas workers, contribute to about ten percent of Philippine GDP (World Bank 2017). Rodriguez’s work illuminates the Philippine state’s explicit facilitation and production of overseas employment through the creation and funding of education and training programs designed to specifically meet overseas labor demands and the reconfiguration of notions of Philippine citizenship. National holidays and official government discourses have altered notions

²⁸ Hochschild served on Parrenas’ dissertation committee at UC-Berkeley.

of citizenship and voting eligibility to include those overseas and celebrate migrant workers as *bagong bayani*, the new national heroes, akin to colonial era revolutionaries (Rafael 2000).

Geographer Geraldine Pratt (1999) finds that in producing Filipina domestic workers in Canada as subservient workers more willing to endure long work hours and low pay, the discourses of hiring agencies, government officials and household employers in Canada work to circumscribe and constrain future employment trajectories and possibilities for these women. In short, after completing the two year requirement working as a caretaker as stipulated by their immigration visa, women have little opportunity to find employment outside the domestic sphere regardless of the skills and education gained back home in the Philippines. Catherine Ceniza-Choy (2003), traces the proliferation of Philippine-born nurses working in US hospitals to histories of US imperialism. During the American occupation of the archipelago colonial officials created a number of hospital training schools that implemented an Americanized curriculum preparing Filipina women to work as nurses not in their homeland, but in the US. Many of these programs remain today supplying the US with far more foreign born nurses from the Philippines than any other country. Similarly, Anna Guevarra (2009) explains there is nothing *natural* about the production of the Filipina migrant worker as the “ideal care worker” or migrant laborer. Her ethnographic work studies Filipino labor brokerage agencies that match local workers with foreign employers. She suggests that these agencies, the remittance-dependent Philippine state and workers’ representation of themselves to employers coalesce together with racialized, gendered and colonial histories and contemporary divisions of labor to inhere Filipina women with a “perceived innate capability to do care work” (123).²⁹ Drawing on

²⁹ This migration is of course not limited to women. Contrary to ubiquity of the Filipina domestic worker, Filipino men in recent years have surpassed Filipina women as the dominant group in migration for work abroad (Fajardo 2011). Kale Fajardo’s ethnography of Filipino seamen demonstrates that Filipino men compromise about one-fifth

similar racialized, colonial and gendered tropes, men in Barretto discursively constructed Filipina wives as idealized caretakers.

Economies of Care

If care emerged as an explicit desire articulated by many of the men I talked to, I soon discovered an entangled economy of care structured by military spousal pension checks, American death and the recognition/unrecognition of caring labor in marriages. As wives of military pensioners, Filipina women, regardless of citizenship status, are eligible to receive a pension check from the US government when their husband passes away. Pension check eligibility is contingent on a wife's enrollment in what is known as the Survivor Benefit Plan. Upon retirement, unless both parties in a marriage opt out, military spouses are automatically enrolled in the pension program. The only way to waive automatic enrollment upon a spouse's retirement is to provide the military with written consent from both spouses thus waiving automatic enrollment. Similarly, at any point after retiring, men may add or change the recipient of their pension check to account for divorces and new marriages.

During fieldwork encouraging men and women to talk about pension checks proved a strategic way to learn about this economy. As I look to demonstrate here, the everyday politics of death and pension checks was often explicitly articulated through discourses regarding deserving wives/ undeserving wives and the recognition/unrecognition of care. Put more simply, men often used the language of care to ensure that wives received pension checks following their deaths, suggesting that a wife's love and care made her deserving of compensation. However in a social world marked by divorces, multiple marriages and transnational lives, this process often proved more complicated than straightforward. Stories soon emerged of men who for a variety of

of all global shipping labor, that is on both passenger ships like cruise ships and international container ships that facilitate global trade.

reasons failed to ensure the paperwork was submitted, thus denying their partners the pension checks they expected after death. It is to this economy of care, recognition, calculated compensation and deliberate refusal to which I now turn. Early feminist movements struggled for understandings of unpaid labor like care as worthy of recognition as work and compensation (Federici 2012) and it is with this in mind that I present the following stories.

In a conversation, with an elderly military retiree in a motorized wheelchair, Charlie, and his wife, Baby, the two spoke frankly about death as they told me about their future plans. Given the man's health problems, they assumed Charlie would die first. I estimated Baby to be in her fifties. The two met during the 1990s at a bar during one of Charlie's, visits with friends to the Philippines. He retired there permanently in 2000 and the two eloped. Following his death, he explained that in addition to receiving his pension check, the couple was in the process of remodeling their house. Once finished, the house would be divided into a set of separate apartments, which could be rented out to supplement his wife's pension check for years after he passed away. Jackson, aged seventy, explained that he had recently put together a folder of paperwork for his wife. She was in her sixties and the folder included all of the paperwork she would need to ensure she received her survivor benefit package. In telling me that the two had also begun placing additional savings in a separate bank account for his wife he said, "If something happens to me, she will be alright...she'll be taken care of."

Geographer Kelsey Hanrahan (2015) writes, "understanding that care takes place in emotionally-complex and even contradictory settings may suggest that there is more to the need for care than (feminine) inclinations that are seen as opposite to (masculine) rational inclinations" (23). While men often drew explicit links between Filipina femininity and a presumed predisposition for care, Hanrahan helps orient our understanding of care to recognize

these men's assurances of financial security as another form of care. The majority of the men I spoke with had some financial plan in place for their wife if they were to pass away first. Like Jackson, for most men, such planning included a folder with basic information, pension paperwork and life insurance policies, social security cards and wills that clearly and officially stated that a wife was to be the beneficiary upon death.

It soon emerged that the folders were a coordinated effort by leaders in the community. A few years ago, one man with a leadership position in a local retiree organization had put together a sample folder and distributed it to the group to be used as an example of steps men could take. Wives in the Support Club, introduced in Chapter One, were aware of this folder. They told me how they had previously used meeting time at the Support Club to share stories of how to encourage men to put such a folder together emphasizing the need to facilitate communication between husbands and wives about how to ensure all paperwork was properly signed and marked with wives listed as the beneficiary.

During a four-person interview with two military wives, a military husband and myself, a fascinating story about using pension checks to recognize care emerged. In texting Jocelyn, one of these wives, to set up an interview time, she curiously emphasized how she might not prove to be a helpful research subject. She had only been married to her American husband for less than two years before he passed away. In re-assuring her that I remained interested in her story, she also asked if Leila, another wife I met could accompany her to the interview. Excited for the chance to conduct a joint interview, I agreed and we set up a time. Leila's husband, Efren, a Filipino man in his seventies who gained US citizenship by enlisting in the US navy in the late 1950s also took part in the interview.³⁰

³⁰ During this era, the US Navy enlisted about 2,000 Filipinos annually. These Filipinos were granted US citizenship upon completion of service (Espiritu 1995).

During the conversation, Leila and Efren did most of the talking as Jocelyn's English and my Tagalog proved limited to engage in a full conversation. In the beginning I regularly tried to engage Jocelyn in Tagalog but more often than not Leila chose to intervene on her behalf, likely a reflection of both my Tagalog skills but also because Leila was a talkative woman who seemed eager to help provide information for my project. While Jocelyn sat nearby, Leila told me the story of an American husband and Filipina wife who had a live-in caretaker who worked for the family for twenty years. During this span, the wife and a son passed away leaving the caretaker and the American as the only two residents of the house. Some years later, the man also got sick and, as Leila explained, about two years before he passed away, he asked the caretaker to "marry" him. In doing so, he emphasized that he wanted the caretaker to receive his pension check following his impending death. Simply put, this man had decided to use marriage to strategically reward the live-in-caretaker who had worked for him and his family for two decades.

After hearing this story I smiled, and asked Leila where the "caretaker" was now? Both Efren and Leila laughed and pointed to Jocelyn seated beside them. As more of the story emerged, I learned that before asking Jocelyn to marry him, the American approached Leila, a leader in the community knowledgeable about pension checks, and asked her if transferring his pension to Jocelyn was logistically possible? Over a number of months Leila and the American worked on the details getting the paperwork in order and the man then asked Jocelyn to marry him. Leila hosted the wedding at a community space she had access to. After hearing her story, I asked Jocelyn in Tagalog:³¹

Mike: So, Jocelyn what did you think when he asked if 'you wanted to be his wife'

³¹ Joseph Palis provided translation help to parts of my interview with Jocelyn, including here.

Jocelyn: I initially said no, of course. I don't want to. That I didn't, I didn't agree and I told him.

Efren: Ano (*What*), you didn't agree yet?

Jocelyn: No. No, I didn't agree... First, I said, what would your relatives say if I say yes to your offer? And, there is no formal okay, there is none of that.

Jocelyn later clarified her anxiety regarding the man's American relatives, worried that if they found out, they would prevent her from actually receiving the pension check. During the conversation, Leila specifically framed her motivation for helping arrange the paperwork through the lens of care and recognition. She emphasized the word "deserved" multiple times to explain why she helped. She remembered her initial reaction to the American's inquiry about making Jocelyn the beneficiary, "So I said good. Because she deserved it because *I knew how well she took care of him.*" In referencing the man's relatives who ultimately did contest Jocelyn receiving the money, Leila continued, "I think she *deserved* it because I know there are so many cases like that who end up with nothing. Of taking care of (pause), because if she's not married to him when he died you know what they are going to do, the relatives? They would just throw them [Jocelyn] away. 'You are out. Your service is finished.' But because of the title, she is the Mrs. they cannot say anything."

As this exchange so clearly demonstrates, both the American man and Leila recognize Jocelyn's extensive service to the family as a caretaker as justifying her compensation in the form of a pension check. The recognition of "unproductive" household labor like care work has long been a feminist struggle, gaining particular salience during the second wave feminist movement. Sylvia Federici (2012) and others involved in the Wages for Housework campaign sought to elucidate capitalism's reliance on and devaluation of reproductive labor, like care work. In language that in part mirrors some of the arguments made by feminists like Federici,

Leila's articulation of Jocelyn as someone who can be "thrown out" by relatives once her service is finished demonstrates the precarity and unrecognition of this labor.

However, Jocelyn's story in part also exemplifies the ways in which some men in Barretto explicitly recognized the intimate labor of spouses. Jocelyn also inherited the man's house and was living there now with her younger sister. With the monthly pension check, she no longer had to work and was also able to care for her sister who suffered from mental disabilities. While Jocelyn, is of course not a wife in the way that many of the other women were, I use her story here because it so clearly articulates the way many men viewed ensuring a wife's future financial stability through the framework of recognizing them for their love, care and affection. Jocelyn's story in part reflects the opportunities to remake a seemingly rigid bureaucratic government process to rework the economies of care and recognition.

In contrast, stories of the exact opposite soon emerged where men made deliberate attempts to deem wives as unworthy of compensation in the event of their death. Efren, the Filipino husband briefly introduced above, told me another story that had happened a few years prior.

So this guy gets married to a Filipina woman and then they split and another woman takes care of him [and lives with him]. So the documents, the insurance is under the other woman. And the present woman who took good care of him, for many years and then he kicked the bucket. And after he kicked the bucket this woman thinking that all the benefits would be hers but it's not it's the other woman's because they didn't transfer the documentation the supporting documents he's the beneficiary but it's the other woman. She won't get nothing at all. And you'd kneel down at the embassy and you've got nothing to show and it happened.

I soon learned that men lying about previous wives and never changing insurance and military benefit paperwork to reflect new marriages proved to be the most common way in which wives did not receive pension checks they expected to. Often men's official paperwork listed a

previous wife as the recipient even if the two had divorced or separated decades earlier, and the man had remarried in the Philippines. In Efren's story, this "other woman" rather than the woman who "takes care of him" was legally recognized as the recipient, and thus the caring girlfriend received no compensation. Vincent, an American man who regularly performed military burial services of American veterans explained he would sometimes find old marriage certificates that listed a former wife as the official spouse. When that occurred, women who thought they were listed as the beneficiary of a pension check had no legal standing to receive the money. Vincent explained that he knew of a handful of guys technically married to "wives" in the US or Japan that current Filipina partners had no idea even existed until after an American's death. He casually referred to this occurrence as "a surprise for everybody." Leila emphasized regarding the logistical and bureaucratic process of recognition, "Mostly it is the responsibility of the [American] sponsor to really be aware. Most of them are ageing. Most of them are sick. They know they are sick. But they will not tell that to the woman. They are not divorced when they come here. They find somebody who will take care of them. The poor lady is *honestly serving with her hearts, helping him, taking care of him.*"

In talking about why some men did not ensure paperwork was properly taken care of I heard a variety of reasons: men were deemed selfish, lazy, did not think they would die soon or fully understand the complexity of the bureaucratic system. Belinda, a woman I later introduce more in depth, offered another story based on her own experience with a husband who tricked her into forfeiting her benefits. Upon his retirement, Belinda's husband asked her to sign the document, waiving her consent to receive benefits. Without explaining what the implications would be, he simply told her he did not want to pay the increased monthly premiums. Upon signing, she forfeited the pension's payments and never saw a check after he passed. She

explained that this experience and being lied to influenced her to join and work for the Support Club, “So that’s why I decided to join this Support Club, so I can share with the other girls that you need to know your rights, your benefits. Because it’s not too late yet. Try to convince your husband, ok please sign this form so you can update this, you know something like that. Just don’t think about me, think about the children, even if you hate me or something like that.”

Later in the conversation I asked her why she thinks men occasionally lie or do not tell wives about previous marriages. In this moment I have no idea if she was reflecting on her personal experience, but she offered

They think that when I pass away, your tricycle driver [Filipino] boyfriend will just take their money anyhow. So I’m not gonna give my money to your new boyfriend. They think that, you know! They think the wife when they pass away will find this tricycle driver. [Laughs]. That you and the other boyfriend will just take advantage of the paycheck every month. That’s what they’re thinking! It’s true! [Laughs]. But now the women, they started to ask questions. That’s why the husband sometimes they don’t want the wife to go [to the meeting], it’s funny but it’s true.

In contrast to Belinda’s husband, most of the men I talked to did choose to ensure their wives received pension checks. As men desired and equated Filipina femininity with care, drawing on globalized gendered and racialized scripts to do so, in performing the role of the caring wife, women gained access to pension checks and other material benefits. For some of my research subjects, these included life insurance policies, savings accounts and income from rented apartment buildings. In the next section, I argue that despite the relevance of this framing, to read these marriages solely as sites of exchange wherein women perform the role of caring wife to access a potential future pension check proves limiting. As men desired care, by performing the expected and gendered duties inscribed onto them as foreign wives by American men, Filipina women could perform these duties to enter into marriage. Marriage then provided the opportunity to realize these women’s own dreams, desires and objectives- desires that were

not solely economic. In highlighting the lives of two wives, I look to understand how in embodying the roles of the object of desire and the caring wife, Belinda and Tess, respectively, not only materially benefited but also transformed as subjects. In particular I focus on how transnational marriage opened up new spaces of belonging and access to social worlds, corroded previous social and familial ties to the Philippines when these women moved away, and remade Belinda and Tess' subjectivities by introducing new dreams, desires and opportunities for employment and intimacy.

Wives' Desires and Meeting Gendered Expectations

Belinda met her husband while working as a waitress in a bar at the age of eighteen, framing her motivations for marriage in economic terms. She told me that like many other women working in the bars at that time, she came from a very poor family in Barretto. For her, working as a waitress in the bar and potentially marrying an American man during the 1980s offered the best opportunity to provide for her young son. She told me,

That's why so many Filipinas married the military and then they leave and go back to the States, *di ba* (right)? A lot of us, just a lot. But then at that time there were so many chances you could marry because there's so many guys and *of course Americans like brown girls, right?* So I worked at the bar and restaurant as a waitress but then of course I was thinking to meet a guy and get married, right? My thinking is ok, whoever asks me to marry them, I'll go along and then if I don't love the guy, I'll marry him because of my son's future because that's basically my big picture I'm looking at. I want a good future for my son. So I was only 18 years old when I met my husband. I married my husband when I was 18. So too young. Still young.

After meeting in the bar and soon after agreeing to get married, the couple was required to complete a number of government forms. The forms included what Belinda called a "Certificate of Legal Capacity to Marry an Alien." Necessary to prove that Belinda was not married to someone else at the time, Belinda emphasized the word alien during our interview and laughed, "which is me an '*alien*.'" Belinda was also required to attend a multi-day "bride

seminar” at Subic Bay Naval Base. According to her, at the seminar American officials taught prospective foreign brides how to use household appliances like washing machines, dishwashers, and a microwave and how to balance a checkbook. USO (United Service Organizations) bride schools first emerged after the Korean War (Enloe 2000, 97-98). As recently as 2007, it seems that bride seminars continue to take place in Korea, teaching potential Korean brides about the customs of American holidays, how to use stoves and balance checkbooks (Rowland 2007).

While Belinda and I both laughed as she made light of the US government’s classification of her as “alien,” the formal term delineating her as a non-citizen, this laughter in part masks the racialized and geographic barriers of citizenship crossed through marriage. While Belinda did not particularly emphasize the bride seminar during our discussion, I do so here. More than mere bureaucratic checklist, the bride school signifies that women like Belinda had to partially alter their subjectivities to enter into these transnational marriages as they were explicitly marked by the US government as outsider. In a sense the bride school rather blatantly suggested to foreign brides at that time, like Belinda, to be married to an American man, you must transform yourself to perform expected and specific roles. Later in this section, I develop this idea further but before doing so want to present one more story of courtship and gendered expectations in marriage.

Tess was in her sixties and had been married to her husband, Brian an American sailor, for more than thirty years before he passed away from an illness in 2015. Tess explained that she initially had no interest in finding a spouse when she first met Brian. Her previous husband, a Filipino man, had passed away from alcoholism a few years before she met Brian in the 1980s. Stressing her hesitancy to re-marry and a weariness of suffering the pain of heartbreak again, she recalled choosing to instead focus on raising her children and running her business. Tess owned a

shop that sold wood carvings and other souvenirs to Americans near the Navy base and initially met Brian when a mutual friend accompanied him to the shop. In the months that followed, Brian regularly visited the store and her apartment when his navy ship was in port and Tess soon realized his intentions of romantic courtship.

Attempting to make her lack of romantic interest clear, she described her first interactions with Brian as pure “*bola bola*” (bullshit), playfully teasing him whenever he would visit but being careful not to imply romantic interest. Refusing to reciprocate or acknowledge his gestures of courtship which grew more frequent as the months went by Tess articulated her reluctance in a perhaps surprising way. She told me, “And I do not want to be involved, *taking care of him and if he gets sick and everything, and I am not a good wife if I do that*. So I’m going to avoid living with somebody. *I want to be a good wife. But if you do not like the man that you marry and then you do not take care of him, then you are not a good wife and that’s not good.*”

As evidenced here, Tess’s hesitancy to get involved and lack of interest is informed by doubts about whether she could properly take care of Brian in marriage and if he gets sick. Tess explicitly and clearly equates being “a good wife” with the capacity to love and the ability to take care of her husband. As the interview continued Tess explained how her friends pressured her to accept the man’s advances, as one friend emphasized that she “grab” the opportunity to date an American. Tess remembers her friend advising her, “You will like him one day.” As time passed, the two started to spend more time together, even going on a few dates. During one of these dates, Brian offered Tess money to help with the raising of her children, which she refused. Tess began to lose sleep unsure of whether she should date Brian. After recounting her refusal of Brian’s money, she again emphasized her independence, the enjoyment she received from

running her business and the fact that she only viewed Brian “as a friend.” However as she then explained to me, something unexpected happened. Tess remembered,

The mother called. She called me, from the States. She called me...She said ‘*take care of my son*. He is a nice guy. He is my only son. We are not poor we have an inheritance for him, we have horses for racing, and we have an apartment here...’ [I thought] Oh my god, what’s going on?

Mike: So, this is a lot more serious than you thought?

Tess: Yea, oh my God. Maybe they are trying to test me. Maybe I’m after their [money]. So, I said, ‘Your son comes down here and we talk nice to each other. We are friends only.’

Brian’s mother [voiced by Tess]: My son told me he found someone he likes in the Philippines. *Please help my son. Take care of my son.*

Tess: Yes, she’s begging me. Oh, my God. This is the first time in my life a mother kept *asking me if I could take care of her son*. Mike, Jesus, I don’t know.

Mike: Did you ever expect the mother to call you?

Tess: No...His mother is in the business of racing horses, they make money. So, I told her we [Tess and her children] are not like that, we are not poor also. I’m just a hard-working woman. I make money on my own.

Brian’s mother: We are going to help you.

Tess: I don’t need help...

Brian’s mother: Tess, please, *take care of him* and I want to see you here in the States.

Mike: What did you think when she said take care of him?

Tess: He is only my friend, *how could I take care of him?* I didn’t even say I loved him.

A few months later, Brian asked her to marry him and with her children’s blessing, Tess agreed. She did not elaborate but it seemed that this phone call represented a turning point. Of interest in these two accounts are the clear barriers through which these women had to pass to

enter into marriage, for Belinda the bride seminar, for Tess a mother-in-law with specific expectations regarding care.

In her ethnography of cyber marriage tours and the American men and Latin American women who meet up during these tours in Mexico and Colombia, Felicity Amaya Schaeffer (2012) analyzes the “colliding fantasies” that bring these two groups together into courtship and marriage. For Schaeffer the desires that push these bodies together must be understood as divergent and seemingly contradictory. Her interviews suggest that Western men often desire a more “traditional” woman, seemingly more in line with traditional gender roles and presume the middle class Latina women they meet to embody these traits. In contrast she finds that women often desire mobility, US citizenship, authentic intimacy, more equitable gender roles and a “more modern” man, all of which manifest for them in American men and in explicit contrast to what they see as more patriarchal societies and limiting opportunities in Mexico and Colombia. Schaeffer’s project then is an analysis of how these discrepant desires are negotiated. She suggests that even as they desire more equitable gender relations with American men, women remake their bodies on marriage tours through the use of make-up, clothing and sometimes plastic surgery to appeal to these men’s desires for a more “traditional woman.” Thus in playing up their feminine beauty and sexuality on tours, these Latina women willingly refashion themselves as “erotic objects of exchange” to realize their own dreams and desires in a seemingly contradictory but calculated way.

In a similar sense, Lieba Faier (2009) argues transnational Filipina-Japanese marriages in rural Japan are best understood as relational “sites of encounter” where “discrepantly located agendas and forms of desire come into productive relation” (45 and 4). In these marriages foreign Filipina wives, Japanese husbands and occasionally Japanese mothers-in-law struggle

over, contest, concede, and rework the boundaries of citizenship and belonging. She finds that in embodying the traits of *oyomesan*, defined as a traditional Japanese bride and daughter-in-law, some Filipina women gain access, belonging and citizenship to this rural Japanese community and their husband's families. For Faier belonging and citizenship are granted by becoming and embodying *oyomesan*. As women learn the rhythms, duties and expectations of *oyomesan*, like properly cooking Japanese food and caring for a mother-in-law, some are granted the exclusive status of belonging while others fail to do so. Faier's ethnography is also noteworthy for analyzing how performing this role over time transforms these Filipina women's lives, subjectivities and spaces of belonging as new dreams and desires are introduced via marriage in perhaps surprising and unexpected ways.

Thus, in much the same way these women in Japan and Latin America remake their bodies and perform expected duties to conform to and match the desires of their spouses and potential suitors, Belinda and Tess seemed to augment their value as wives by strategically performing and embodying the expectations and desires of their future husbands. (And in Tess' case, her mother in law's expectations). For Tess, this meant initial hesitation and doubt about performing and embodying the role of a caring wife. After a seemingly transformative phone call, Tess seemed willing to give marriage a try understanding that the provision of care was expected of her by her husband and his mother. For Tess, care proved not only a gendered expectation but also a salient marker of her-own value in marriage, as she conflated the failure to perform care with being a "bad wife." In part by performing the role of the caring wife Tess embodied the colonial, racialized and gendered histories that led many American men to equate Filipina femininity with an inherent disposition for caring labor. But in performing such a role

Tess' augmented her value as a wife and used marriage as a conduit to access new spaces of belonging and a new life that she later admitted changed her in surprising ways.

Similarly then to enter into marriage, Belinda had to refashion her own identity. Her required attendance at the military "bride seminar" represents both the formal process to citizenship and a rather blatant reflection of the gendered expectations placed on her as a new bride, a transformation from Filipina "alien" to Filipina-American bride. Similarly her comment "of course Americans like brown girls" hints at another way in which she ascribed value to her role as a wife by embodying her husband's desires for a younger, desirable Filipina spouse who worked in a bar.

Both Tess and Belinda explained that love was not initially a part of their marriages. In refashioning their bodies and subjectivities to meet desires and expectations, Belinda played up her role as a desired "brown girl" while Tess embodied the traits of a caring wife. Thus in highlighting Tess' story in particular and intersecting it with many of the desires expressed by men for a wife who would "care for them", I use Tess story to help explain why care emerged as such a useful concept through which to frame these marriages. Of particular interest to both the ethnographies highlighted here and my own research was the racialized and gendered power dynamics that hierarchically determined *who* had to alter their bodies and embodied performances to meet the requirements of marriage. Much like the spaces of the bar where bartenders and waitresses tolerated and accommodated men's desires and crude jokes, to enter into marriages, Tess and Belinda accommodated husband's expectations.

Subjective and Spatial Transformations

During the early 2000s authors writing about transnational marriages between Asian women and Western men often did so through the lens of locating the diverse forms of agency

enacted by marriage migrants and mail-order-brides (Constable 2003; Constable 2004; Piper and Roces 2004). In identifying the complicated forms through which this agency manifested, such work sought to intervene against and complicate popular notions of the women in these marriages as “victims” forced to marry as a last resort in response to economic conditions in their home countries. In complicating marriage agendas beyond mere economic calculus as conditioned by structural forces, researchers identified the wide array of reasons women articulated desires for marriage. Such desires included love, the opportunity to leave patriarchal societies at home, marriage as an alternative to low paying jobs, and the chance for travel and adventure.

This work adds nuance to popular conceptions of transnational marriages pushing beyond reading them as strictly utilitarian relationships as it locates, recognizes and names the diverse reasons why transnational subjects get married. Beyond recognizing such interests, I see additional value in unpacking the ways Filipina-American marriages transform lives over time. Put another way, within very real economies of care, exchange and pension checks I look to grapple with how the relational experience of marriage not only provides increased access to increased material wealth and social status but also changes and transforms subjectivities. As Filipina wives gain access to marriages and thus pension checks by performing and embodying the gendered roles and expectations placed on them as Filipina wives, the relational experience of marriage also serves a conduit to new experiences, new opportunities and new spaces of belonging.

During our interview, Tess recounted the final weeks of her husband’s life before he passed away as his illness worsened. She remembered him telling her, “Honey, take care of yourself. I will leave you, you have your benefits already because you have pension.” Growing

visibly emotional, with her voice begging to waiver during our interview, she remembered replying to him, “I don’t need that! I don’t need the benefits! I don’t care, I want you. I want you to live here forever.” A few minutes later she echoed much of what she had told me previously regarding their courtship and marriage saying, “[Initially] “I hated him. I don’t like him. It’s true. God knows about that. I kept on bullshitting him and everything but the more, the years goes by, the more I started to love him and take care of him. I cried for him when he got sick. I wanted to be the one to die, I wanted him to live. Imagine that, Mike. I said honey, please don’t leave because if you leave me what am I gonna do now?”

After thirty-two years of marriage in which Tess overcame her initial doubts about her ability to embody an idealized and desired figure of the caring Filipina wife, Tess asked simply and earnestly, “what am I gonna do now?” Having satisfied the desires of a mother-in-law, Tess’ spaces of social belonging and friendship were expanded through a transnational life and marriage in which she and her husband spent six months out of every year between the Philippines and the Pacific Northwest in the US. Tess’ relationship with a man she initially rebuked, choosing playful jokes over intimacy, had morphed into a three decade long marriage she described as fulfilling and full of love with a man who “taught me so much, Mike.”

In performing and embodying care over time, Tess not only fell in love but struggled to imagine her life without her husband as she told him she would prefer her own death over his. In thirty-two years of marriage, their relationship had transformed from one of “*bola-bola*” (bullshit) in a souvenir shop to unconditional love and heartbreak over his death. Tess admitted that following her husband’s passing she spent most of those first few weeks crying and some two years later still regularly searched the empty rooms of her suburban gated community at

night, hoping he might appear. Thus, Tess' own sense of self, her geographies of belonging and her feelings toward Brian shifted dramatically during these thirty-two years.

In embodying the role of a Filipina wife for an American man she met in a bar who "like[d] brown girls", Belinda's geographies similarly expanded. After marrying the first man who asked her to do so in the bar, she moved to Japan as her husband finished his military service. The couple then settled in North Carolina after her husband's retirement. In contrast to Tess' stories of love and fulfillment, Belinda recounted a marriage marked by marital trouble, hardship caused by her husband and personal sacrifice. In North Carolina Belinda found professional success working as an accountant for a multi-national corporation. She found value in her career and recounted how much she enjoyed the job. However, during this time her marriage suffered.

After retiring, her husband struggled to hold down long-term employment in the US, being fired from stable jobs twice for racism to black customers. Struggling to find friends and create meaning in his civilian life, he turned to alcohol and their relationship became both verbally and physically abusive. Belinda became the family's primary provider taking on a second job and regularly working the late night second shift at her accounting job. In having to tolerate his sometimes violent and destructive behavior she said, "At the time I had much patience because I was Filipina. And Filipinas got this [pause], we are patient. We don't get mad so easy. If we could try to take it, we take it, right? So at the time I always take it. Just put up with it."

At some point during his unemployment, her husband took a vacation to Barretto to visit old friends. Upon his return, he excitedly told her that he wanted to move the family there, highlighting the community of retirees and his desire to use his military benefits to take courses

at a local college. In our interview she recalled her reluctance to move back to the Philippines, especially highlighting the fact that she did not want to leave her job or the friends and life she had carved out in North Carolina. In agreeing to move back, she framed the decision as a sacrifice for her husband who as a veteran “deserved” the retirement he wanted. Using part of Belinda’s 401K from her accounting job, the couple moved back and added a second and third story to Belinda’s parent’s home in Barretto. Her husband ultimately passed away from his drinking habits a few years after the couple moved to Barretto and she was currently dating another military retiree who owned a restaurant/bar in town.

Thus, I read the parts of Belinda’s marriage story relayed here as one which provided access to new social worlds- unrestricted access to Japan as a military spouse, her job as an accountant in North Carolina and the friends she made in both places. In part it is also one of material benefits and expanded opportunities. Constructed in part through her savings from her accounting job, Belinda’s home was one of the nicest in the neighborhood in which I lived. Three stories tall, it housed not only her and her youngest daughter on the second floor but members of her extended family on the first. On the third floor, Belinda had constructed an impressive dance studio with floor to ceiling mirrors and a large window overlooking the neighborhood. Three times a week, she taught a Zumba class for local women and I woke up many mornings to thumping dance music reverberating through the neighborhood from her speaker system (I also got talked into participating in the Zumba class a handful of times).

In addition to Zumba instructor, Belinda served in two other community positions and did not have to work as she was able to live comfortably off of her savings from the US. She was well known in the American expatriate and local Filipino communities. The American men I got to know almost always identified her by her beauty. Many remarked that she was one of the most

beautiful women working in the bars years ago and that her good looks never left now that she was in her fifties. Again, Belinda served as the director of the wives' Support Club as introduced earlier in Chapter One. She also worked as the head of a charity organization funded by American military men that provided local children with school supplies. At the time of our interview, Belinda was also considering accepting a government position with the local *barangay* (village/ward), a position which her American boyfriend eventually convinced her to decline suggesting she was already too busy.

In describing how much she enjoyed keeping busy and describing her many jobs to me, it was clear Belinda gained immense satisfaction from both the work she did in the community and her elevated social status. Again her community work and status must be read through the opportunities granted and social worlds opened up by her transnational marriage.

In emphasizing the transformation of lives and the opening up of new spaces of belonging for Tess and Belinda, previous social ties and connections to home simultaneously deteriorated. Vicente Rafael (2000) argues that for migrant Filipino workers leaving to gain employment overseas is akin to a chance at fortune and the ability to earn respect and recognition at home by providing family members with remittances. However, Rafael suggests that in going abroad "one also risks uncertain conditions and the prospect of becoming alienated abroad and at home" (210). Similarly Neferti Tadiar (2012) likens these Filipina migrants to gamblers "whose own fate-playing actions not only corrode the socialites of their naturalized belonging but also constantly generate new spaces of unpredictability" (800). Drawing on the work of Rafael and Tadiar, as opportunities and social worlds open up, previous social ties seemed to fall away. For Tess this manifested in what seemed like a lack of ties to the community in which she lived. Living in her gated community, Tess explained she rarely left the house except to attend the

monthly Support Club meetings. As she longed for her husband Tess also told me about her best friend, another Filipina woman who lived on the West coast of the US and whom Tess also missed dearly now that she was living permanently in the Philippines.

Similarly, as Belinda was granted access to the exclusive American social world in Barretto through her previous marriage, her current romantic relationship and her volunteer and charity work, her standing in the Filipino community seemed less certain. While living in Barretto I got to know a Filipino retiree who lived a few houses down from mine. His teenage son was expecting a child with Belinda's teenage daughter and whenever I discussed my relationship with one of them in front of the other, a palpable disconnect seemed to emerge. A usually talkative man, the Filipino retiree, said little and seemed uncomfortable the two times I told him about my developing relationship with Belinda. More than mere awkwardness, his silence hinted at divisions and tension between the two neighbors. Similarly, after attending and telling Belinda about a birthday party I attended at the man's house at which her daughter was present, Belinda asked if I ate any "different kind of food there?" She then clarified, "Sometimes that family likes to eat goat." I similarly read this statement as a marker of the social and classed divisions that separated this man and his family and Belinda.

Belinda later told me when I asked about divisions between Filipina wives and the Filipino community, "Around here if they know you are a dependent wife, most of the dependent wives are stuck up. Ya, around here, they're (Filipinas married to Americans) stuck up because they don't like [it] here." Dom, the young retiree, told me that he could always identify a wife married to a foreigner by the way she dressed and acted hinting at the elevated status they occupied and in explicit contrast to local Filipinos. In Chapter Three I demonstrated the rigid, exclusive socialites of Americans and Filipinos by analyzing segregation in and outside of the

bar. As wives' geographies of belonging expand and generate new socialites via marriage to Americans, it seems that their transnational lives simultaneously corrode old ties to neighborhoods, extended families and shared national belonging.

Thus this section has looked to argue that transnational marriages between Filipina women like Tess and Belinda and their American husbands must be understood as processes of transformation over time. As wives re-make their subjectivities to perform the duty of wife, object of desire or caring wife, social worlds, geographies, subjectivities and material wealth are transformed and remade. Put more simply, lives take on new meaning, people move and old ties and senses of community fall away as new communities and friendships form.

Conclusion

Thus this chapter has used initial desires and motivations for marriage, the performance of care and transformation over time, as a way to frame and begin analyzing transnational marriages. Demonstrating how men often desired a wife who would "take care of them", I suggested that care emerged as a useful analytic through which to explore these marriages. Husbands and wives articulated different reasons to get married and do so to satisfy diverse, sometimes contradictory, desires. In performing the expected, roles of the caring wife or the racialized object of desire often in line with racialized, gendered and colonial scripts I have looked to demonstrate that subjectivities and lives are better understood as relationally constructed. In examining how Tess performed the role of caring wife and as Belinda became a young object of desire, the two augmented their own value as wives through these gendered performances. I then asked how these marriages transform lives over time, focusing specifically on the lives of Belinda and Tess and understand that after initial desires push bodies together, these lives must be understood as ever-changing. I did so through examining their lives through

the lenses of personal transformation, ever-shifting spaces of belonging and emerging access to new social worlds. This is not to say that material wealth is not exchanged in these marriages as bodies come together, or that these relationships are not marked by power asymmetries. But again in performing gendered roles, Filipina wives' lives also take on new meaning, social worlds are remade, and old ties to belonging and informal citizenship fall away as new spaces, opportunities and desires arise.

CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF MILITARIZED INTIMACIES?

Hanging on a wall of the Canteen was a whiteboard with a simple but emotive function: to announce the recent deaths of American veterans in the region and to inform other retirees of the time and location of the ensuing military burial and memorial service. When a retiree first showed me the board, he was visibly shaken by recognizing the name of a friend and explained that such occurrences were becoming more frequent as the months and years passed. Jessie, a waitress introduced in Chapter Three, explained to me that she was also upset by the whiteboard's most recent name as the man had explicitly advocated for her hiring at the Canteen. During the first few weeks of her hiring, the restaurant was short on money and this man had paid her salary directly out of his own pocket until management could secure her salary and permanently hire her. Jessie had recently been promoted to bar and restaurant manager, becoming the first Filipina woman to hold this position in the Canteen's history.

As it centered some of the intimate social relations in contemporary Barretto, my thesis has understood the bodies of my research subjects as having been pushed together by histories of empire, militarization and globalization. But as these broad histories and social formations help illuminate the very existence of this retiree community, ethnographic attention to the social worlds of this community elucidates the surprising ways that bodies come together to align, repel, make one another comfortable, fight, cry and transform in perhaps surprising ways. In short while I have acknowledged the way broad social formations brought bodies together, I have argued that only in paying attention to what bodies do when they come together can we

better understand the very formation and production of some of these large scale forces that we use to categorize and understand our worlds.

In the Chapter Two, I demonstrated how the material and materiel left behind by the American military provided a “path dependency” for the Subic Bay Freeport Zone’s contemporary economic form, one oriented towards the servicing of foreign products and companies (Mitchell 2012). In Chapter Three, I introduced my ethnography of Barretto’s retiree bars explaining how belonging and senses of comfort for American military retirees depend on explicit inclusions and exclusions drawn along lines of race, gender, age and nationality. In the next chapter, I further unpacked this belonging examining how the comfortable, exclusive space of the retiree bar facilitates an ageing masculinity that “extends the lifetimes” of these men’s masculinities but is also one that depends on the gendered service labor of those women who work there (Tadiar 2012). The most recent chapter analyzed Filipina-American marriages first asking how seemingly discrepant desires first push American men and Filipina women together into marriage before analyzing how Belinda and Tess’ lives transformed over time as a result of these marriages. For Belinda and Tess upon entering marriage previous social and geographic ties faded away and new ones were forged.

The intimate way that historical social formations like empire, militarization and gender have shaped both the physical landscape and influenced how these bodies interact with one another today has served as a unifying theme throughout this thesis. This has been evidenced through a number of examples from the way leftover fuel storage tanks influenced politicians in Subic’s base conversion to the way men’s memories of Subic’s bars during their military service influence their gendered and racialized conceptions of bartenders in the retiree bar and thus how they perform their masculinity in those spaces today. But in its attention to the ethnographic, this

thesis has also demonstrated those moments when familiar social formations fail as totalizing entities. Such moments—from Jessie’s surprising alliance with this now deceased American man to bartender’s feelings of ostracization in Filipino communities to Tess’ reflections following the death of her husband—demonstrate the way that expected alliances, structures, divisions and categorizations are reworked and reconstituted when lives come together.

In concluding this thesis, I wonder about the future of militarized intimacies in Barretto. As it evokes the militarized history of this place through the death and memorial services of military veterans, the whiteboard simultaneously demonstrates the temporal contingency of the space in which I embedded myself for five weeks. Populated by mostly ageing Vietnam veterans, Barretto’s social scene will inevitably shift in the coming years. Anecdotes of the decline of American men and the rise of German bakeries suggest that it already is changing demographically and socially. But what do these trends mean for the future of militarized intimacies more broadly? As the geographies and nature of warfare have shifted since the end of the Cold War, will and are new international pockets of military retirees opening up in locations outside of Southeast Asia? Will the cultural and social politics of places like Iraq, Afghanistan or Saudi Arabia facilitate different forms of masculinity or attract veterans in the coming years? One can presume that they will not attract thousands of retirees in the same way that Barretto has. As I have argued, this thesis is so much more than the exploration of the intimate. As the intimate lends itself to ask broader geopolitical questions what might future militarized and transnational intimacies tell us about processes of empire and militarization today?

Of course, my fieldwork does not prove historically exceptional in the Philippines. Given long standing US colonial, geopolitical and military interests in the Philippines, American military expatriates and militarized Filipina-American intimacies flicker and emerge elsewhere

in Philippine historiography. Historian Cynthia Marasigan (2010) notes that after the Philippine-American War, some twenty percent of American black veterans who fought in the war lived in the Philippines in the years that followed. For Marasigan, many of these black soldiers chose to settle, work, marry local women and raise families in the Philippines rather than return to the racism of the American South. Victor Mendoza (2015) suggests that American veterans, white and black, who stayed in the Philippines following the Philippine-American War proved to be an uncomfortable threat to the legitimacy of the newly established colonial government. Mendoza notes that American officials were “embarrassed both on the global stage and in front of Philippine elites by the increasing visibility of veterans languishing from lewd behavior on the island” (48). In the eyes of the colonial state, the drunken, unproductive, immoral, often criminal behavior of some of these American veterans undermined the colonial government’s attempts to impress Filipinos with the seeming advantages of an American way of life.

In addition to the brief relationship of Isabel Rosario Cooper and Douglas MacArthur as outlined in the last chapter, militarized American-Filipina intimacies extended to the mid-twentieth century, emerging in historical analysis of this period. In 1948 Celia Mariano, then an established Filipina leader in the Partido ng Komunista ng Pilipinas (Communist Party of the Philippines) married American William Pomeroy, a WWII veteran. Pomeroy, also a communist, returned to the country after fighting there in the war. Together Mariano and Pomeroy climbed the ranks of the Party during the *Hukbalahap* armed struggle that sought to expropriate land from wealthy landlords in the Central Luzon region (Lanzona 2009).

During fieldwork, I was struck by the disparate jobs men described performing during their military careers. Amongst infantry men and bomb specialists I encountered engineers, restaurant and cafeteria managers and submarine painters. Geographer Adam Moore (2017) has

written about the privatization of the US military, focusing on the recruiting practices and labor exploitation of mostly South and Southeast Asian men contracted to work in Iraq and Afghanistan. During the years in which my research subjects served, many of those tasks now contracted out to what Moore calls “a global army of civilian laborers” would have been performed by American men like those I got to know in Barretto or by local Filipino contract workers who lived in the base communities. Broadly the contractualization of foreign South and Southeast Asian workers in military sites in the Middle East, conjures images of disconnect, unfamiliarity and a lack of intimacy between military occupiers, foreign service workers and host civilians. As intimate possibilities between Filipino and American bodies emerged during the American military era at Subic, how are transnational social relations emerging in contemporary and future militarized zones? As these contact zones and military occupation today are rooted not in permanence and familiarity with host nations but by the swiftness, tactical precision and the alienation of privatization, what form do transnational social relations take? While this thesis elucidates the intimate possibilities as facilitated by Cold War era geopolitics, contemporary and future social formations and militarized intimacies remain less certain.

In a similar sense, in theorizing the future of militarism and its embedded nature, perhaps scholars ought to contend and engage directly with the post-colonial. Philippine historian Lisandro Claudio (2015) provocatively asks about the occlusions in Philippine studies as American academics, understood as key contributors to the field, primarily focus on the Philippines as a site of empire. In taking Claudio’s call seriously how might a future study of empire, military base legacies and intimacy in the Philippines simultaneously include localized social formations? How might an analysis of previously militarized spaces that remain today—

financial districts,³² environmentally friendly “green cities”³³ or ports and harbors³⁴ of commerce, weave together the after-effects of imperialism with stories of localized power relations and locally contested asymmetries? And how might a geography and ethnography oriented towards social relations elucidate these intimate intersections?

³² Bonifacio Global City, today Metro Manila’s premiere financial district was created through the Bases Conversion and Development Authority, the government commission created in 1991 based on the Legislative Executive Bases Council’s conversion plan as outlined in Chapter 2.

³³ Clark Green City, at the site of the former Clark Air Force Base, currently bills itself as the country’s “next big metropolis.”

³⁴ As outlined earlier, Subic has been converted into a busy international container port.

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